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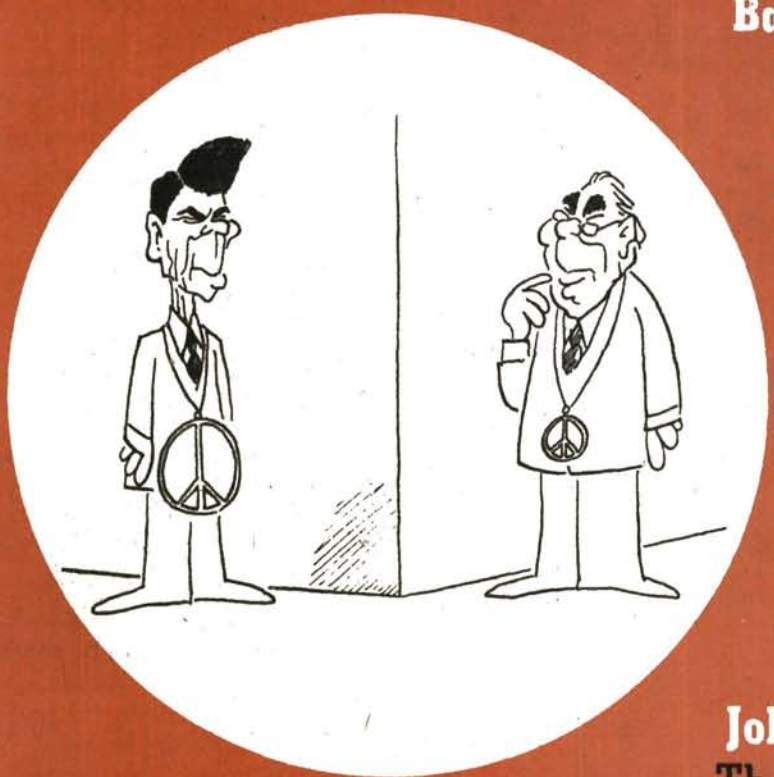

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REMEMBER EL SALVADOR?

THE FUTURE O[illegible]WSHIP

James Tunstead Burtchae[illegible]

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Correspondence

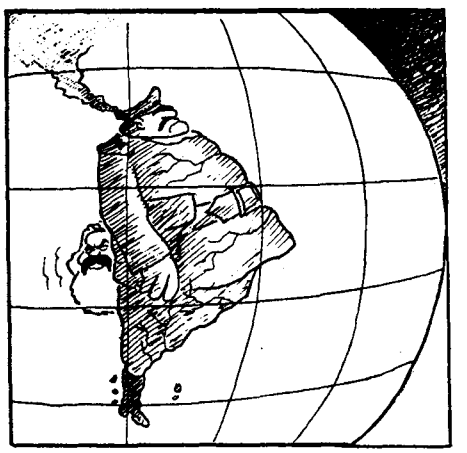
EL SALVADOR: AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Narberth, Pa.

To the Editors: It is disappointing to see *Commonweal* ["El Salvador: America's Poland?" Feb. 22] give credence and weight to Zaid's remarks in *Dissent* and use them to weaken its stance on the El Salvador issue. I leave to others a critique of Zaid's points denigrating the rebels. I address myself to the propaganda aspect of his piece and the role of "social democracy."

One reason Solidarity can be "Mr. Clean" is that up to the imposition of martial law in Poland it was allowed to mobilize and argue — Solidarity was harassed, but it was not dismantled and its leaders eliminated by "death squads." It has not been widely noted in the United States that in "totalitarian" Poland, Lech Walesa organized, propagandized, and survived — Jacobo Timmerman, a fervent anti-Communist, asks, "Do you imagine in 'authoritarian' Argentina, a movement like Solidarity? Impossible. They would kill everybody, Lech Walesa, everybody." Survival in Argentina, or El Salvador, would have to be under arduous conditions underground and with the imminent threat of death. Under such conditions counterviolence is inevitable and among the factions brought together underground some will express rigid dogmatism and verbal violence. Western propaganda systems gravitate to the dogmatic-violent fringe, some of which may be creations of the CIA to allow the media and organizations that serve its purposes to quote original sources that demonstrate enemy evil. Thus although the side we are supporting may be observably committing absolutely horrendous crimes, if we can show that the resisting victims are nasty too this is obviously helpful in allowing our continued support. In fact, the more vicious the third-world mafias we support, the more necessary is real or concocted denigration of the victims. That concoction is big business, not just a product of hysteria or "anti-Americanism," is documented in great detail in Philip Agee's *Inside the Company*. *Commonweal* readers should also examine carefully Penny Lernoux's description of the "Banzer plan," established under CIA auspices in Bolivia, one of whose methods "recommended to discredit Catholic progressives was the planting of subversive documents on church premises." (*Cry of the People*, p. 143.)

If El Salvador's rebels can be effectively denigrated, this immobilizes opposition to the large and ongoing U.S. intervention. This political immobilization may be described as the *real* function of the Zaid piece, which has a long background of precedents. In 1964 *Dissent* objected to a U.S. withdrawal from South Vietnam on the ground of the inhumanity of such a move, which would leave the anti-Communists subject to a bloodbath. And all through the Vietnam war, its emphasis was on the desirability of the United States supporting a middle ground, which did not exist, against the "extremes" which it condemned. By abstracting from the crucial fact that the United States was the sponsor of one of the "extremes," and pretending that it had a lot of freedom of action and could choose the mythical middle ground, the practical effect of this position was to weaken the opposition and subtly justify a continued U.S. presence.



A strange "social democracy" that serves *de facto* to rationalize U.S. adjudication of the third world's problems, as if the United States was an altruistic state without pressing imperial interests! Of course, social democrats can reasonably distrust prospective tyrannies — but in South Vietnam and El Salvador the United States has actively and positively supported tyrannies *plus* socio-economic exploitation of huge dimensions. Cuba can be described as a moderately authoritarian state, but one whose leaders have demonstrated a real concern for the well-being of the majority. Fingernails are not torn out, people are not being murdered on a daily basis. and there is a high degree of *social* democracy. The masses are literate, health care is good, serious malnutrition is a thing of the past, and life expectancy is now higher than in any U.S. client state in Latin America. Twenty percent or more of the children in Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras are severely malnourished. El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile, and Indonesia are tyrannies without any redeeming social democratic features. These regimes are the ones the United States is aggressively pushing and the "social democrats" in their indirect way are once again rationalizing. But *Commonweal* has no business failing to see through this charade of the United States as adjudicator of human rights in El Salvador. The church's Legal Office in El Salvador describes events there as a "prolonged, cruel, and bloody *North American* military intervention," not one that is "home grown" as suggested by you. Getting us out before our progeny leave the people and countryside in

(Continued on page 382)

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THE 'PERFECT LOGIC' OF MIDEAST WAR

ANOTHER WAR in the Middle East. And all perfectly logical, too. The PLO is Israel's sworn enemy. The PLO has been building its military force in Lebanon. Sooner or later, someone would strike, and Israel has always favored sooner. The Arab states are in disarray over the Iran-Iraq conflict. Egypt has not yet digested the Sinai. The West's leaders are on the road. Why wait?

All perfectly logical, at least in that cold-blooded logic — which the Israelis, it should be noted, did not invent — of Mideast survival. That logic has its limits, however. It cannot insure that the fighting in Lebanon will not mushroom into a larger war: at this writing, the response of the Syrians is still in doubt. Nor can logic resolve an old problem for militarily successful nations — getting in is easier than getting out. How can the Israelis prevent the PLO from reconstructing its military infrastructure, except by occupying Lebanon indefinitely? But what the logic of the Lebanese invasion avoids entirely is the impasse that is at the root of the problem.

The Camp David accord specified that the 1.3 million Palestinian Arabs living on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip should be granted "autonomy," a limited form of self-administration, during the five years in which the final status of the Israeli-occupied territory is to be negotiated. But it is becoming increasingly clear that Israel has no intention of giving up the territory it won by force of arms in 1967. In the weeks before the Lebanese incursion, more Arab mayors on the West Bank were dismissed from their posts by their Israeli overlords, more and more previously "moderate" Palestinians were drawn into the resultant protests, and more and more Arab youths were being shot by Israeli soldiers and quick-on-the trigger, ultra-nationalist Jewish settlers. Asked about the possibility that his country would annex the West Bank, which he calls by its Biblical names, Prime Minister Begin is quoted as saying: "You cannot annex your own country. Judea and Samaria are parts of the land of Israel, in which our nation was born." Speaking a few days later at the opening of the Israeli parliament's summer session, he affirmed that Israel would demand national sovereignty over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip at the end of the five-year transition period prescribed by Camp David. At the same time he vowed that no Jewish settlement in the area would be dismantled as the result of any future peace negotiations. In one sense there is nothing new in this; Mr. Begin has always considered the West Bank to be an integral part of Eretz Israel — the Land of Israel. But according to David K. Shipler of the *New York Times*, ever since Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai Mr. Begin has taken to referring to Israel and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as "Western Eretz Israel." Ominously, this phrasing revives the notion of the Revisionist Zionist movement, to which he belongs, that the historical land of Israel also included the East Bank of the Jordan river, which is Jordanian territory. How far do Mr. Begin's ambitions go? How much effective opposition is there to his policies inside Israel? And what kind of alternatives does

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the Labor party offer? Not many so far.

At least as disturbing as Mr. Begin's rhetoric and the general political situation in Israel are the rumors about the plans of one of his potential successors, Defense Minister General Ariel Sharon. If anyone could make Begin look like a moderate, it is Sharon. It is he who is responsible for much of the pressure for additional Jewish settlements on the West Bank and for the increasingly heavy-handed and inflammatory work of the Israeli civilian administration of that area. Many Israelis fear for the future of their Jewish state if Israel annexes the West Bank and Gaza with their 1.3 million Palestinian Arabs. But Sharon is said to have an answer for that: make life so uncomfortable for the Palestinians on the West Bank that many will pack up and leave, including most Palestinian leaders. And it is reported to be Sharon who pushed hardest for an all-out assault on the PLO in Lebanon, already called by many in Israel "Sharon's war" — with what is rumored to be an almost unbelievable scenario in mind: decimate the Palestinians in Lebanon, with a few swipes at the Syrians by the way, pushing the remainder of the PLO completely out of the country and into Jordan; there they will in turn overthrow the moderate King Hussein, take over the country and turn it into a Palestinian state, thus removing the international pressure on Israel for a Palestinian state on the West Bank. Far-fetched, yes, but in the Middle East today nothing is impossible.

It should be clear that neither side in this dispute is blameless. Messrs. Begin and Sharon provide deadly provocation to the PLO almost every day; the PLO in turn regularly arouses Israeli wrath by terroristic actions and inflamatory statements. The PLO and most of the surrounding Arab states remain officially as unreconciled to Israel's existence as the Begin government is to genuine Palestinian self-determination. The difference is that the Israelis are in a position to put their one-sided view into practice; the Arabs are not, and the Israelis are understandably loath to test whether Arab "rejectionism" is as strictly verbal as sometimes claimed.

In a sensitive area where the two superpowers could easily come eyeball to eyeball, both Israelis and Palestinians need a firm and impartial arbitrator if the risk of all-out war is to be avoided. Instead of playing this role, the U.S. has vacillated irresponsibly. We sell the AWACS to Saudi Arabia, then sign a strategic memorandum with Israel, then void it after Begin's move in the Golan Heights, hint at renewing it in the face of Iran's recent victories (which Israel has aided), talk of new arms for Jordan, and even while remonstrating in Washington with Mr. Sharon send him home with massive military and economic grants. It is time that we, too, concentrate on the core problem, unmistakably indicating that we reject Mr. Begin's notion of autonomy on the West Bank, pushing hard for an open PLO affirmation of Israel's right to exist, but also ending our fruitless policy of refusing to talk to the PLO. The immediate task is to contain the Lebanese fighting, but a new initiative on the Palestinian issue is the very next order of the day. Mr. Begin is buying time in Lebanon, but losing time on the West Bank. And the world with him.

In keeping with *Commonweal*'s usual summer schedule, only one issue will be published each month during July and August. The next two issues will be dated July 16 and August 13.

CURIOUSER & CURIOUSER

To the imaginations of many, the adjective dull — as in "dull facts" — has become almost the hallmark of what physical science is about. Dr. Lewis Thomas, chancellor of New York's Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and eminent "biology watcher," was recently protesting this sorry truth in the pages of *The New York Times Magazine*. The fault, lamented Thomas, lies first with working scientists who don't stress in public that it's the *unknown* that engrosses them, and secondly with science teachers who too often present a world of "facts" as fixed and as boring as Latin grammar. "The worst thing that has happened to science education," said Thomas, "is that the fun has gone out of it. . . ."

It's no surprise, and only appropriate, that such criticism should come from a close student of the life sciences. With their uniformitarian, all but timeless 'laws' geared to inanimate, finished objects, classical physics and chemistry never provided satisfactory or imitable models for fields where deviation from the norm and mutation is the rule. But contemporary physics and chemistry are finding their elementary worlds a little closer to Teilhard de Chardin's mystical world — if not Tolkien's — than you might think. Yes, we've noticed some very queer things. The stuff of which we and quarks and marigolds and, yes, the chimpanzees are made gets daily curiouser and curiouser. For one, we've noticed that something suspiciously like spirit, or at least an anthropomorphic logic in violation of time-space, seems to be sneaking into the usual billiard-ball analogues of scientific theory.

How do you explain, for instance, the — shall we say it? — telepathic monkeys biologist Lyall Watson has observed on some Japanese islands? It seems one entrepreneurial young simian (please note: a female) named Imo fancied that a washed potato made better eating than a dirty potato. Having mastered the art of washing the vegetable, Imo then proceeded to teach it to her mother and her playmates; soon all the island's monkeys were doing so. Nothing remarkable there, you say — but wait. The startling part was that monkeys on neighboring islands soon began to replicate the behavior — with no direct contact with Imo and her friends.

Very odd — and odder still that quantum particles, crystals, rats, and if Jung is right about a collective unconscious, humans seem to communicate in similar disregard of conventional causality.

Belgian biochemist Ilya Prigogine won the Nobel Prize in 1977 for providing insight ("poetic," the committee called it) into the innovative, suddenly metamorphic aspect of nature's behavior. Unlike "closed systems" such as a rock or this morning's cold coffee, "open systems" like Imo, seeds, DNA

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molecules, stars, and towns appear to abhor an indefinite steady state, seem to thrive and jump to new levels of complexity by undergoing "perturbations" that look like disintegration, like they're shaking themselves to chaotic death. Only sometimes — and it only takes a few, a sort of "creative minority" within a species — out of such quirky disorganization comes an entirely new, more complex constellation. (The well-known fact that sudden human "conversions" at a certain stage have all the marks of schizophrenic breakdowns, we are tempted to surmise, reflects an analogous pattern.)

But how does the word, if that's the word, of the new constellation get around? Not necessarily by direct contact sports, answers British biochemist Rupert Sheldrake (*The New Science of Life*, Tarcher, 1982). Sheldrake, currently in this country to set up tests for his theory, proposes that organic systems may be regulated not only by the physical laws we already know about, but also by invisible organizing forces he calls "morphogenetic fields." It's as if all the members of the same species are tuned into each other, and when one or a critical mass of the set picks up a different drummer, all the kin receive the improvisation without the necessity of any direct transmission of energy. It may be "morphic resonance," operating across time and somehow nonspatially, says Sheldrake, that accounts for the dissemination of Imo's new trick, or that rats in a maze, separated from the leader, get smart all untaught, or that once an organic compound is first synthesized, subsequent crystallizations around the globe become dramatically easier.

The editors of the prestigious British journal *Nature* called Sheldrake's book, when it appeared in England last year, "the best candidate for burning there has been in years." But *The New Scientist* encouraged the heresy, for one thing because a number of eminent physicists, long familiar with wavicles that seem to 'know' instantly (faster than the speed of light) what their separated kin are doing in another locale (the EPR effect), do not find Sheldrake's speculation all that far out. About a decade ago, London University physicist David Bohm took on the analogous phenomenon in quantum mechanics and postulated, as an explanation, the existence of a vast ocean of patterned energy, beyond time-space, out of which our material order is envisioned to emanate like a small eddy. The theory was subsequently picked up by neurophysiologist Karl Pribram of Stanford University to account for the non local distribution of memory in the brain. The physical universe, Bohm and Pribram are saying, resembles a hologram, a three-dimensional projection of something that acts a lot more like mind than a computer.

All very strange indeed — as if, incipiently and between the linear sequences of orthodox science, at the bottom of things the ancient conception of the *Logos* were stealing in. Perhaps, after all, the secrets of physics are more like the nature Shakespeare fathomed through the character of Lear than what Newton figured with the falling apple. Well, one thing is clear: there's plenty of fun in this newborn cosmology. And if it smells a bit like theology, then so be it. Theology, after all, is too important to be left to the theologians.

El Salvador elections

RECOUNTS, REGRETS

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE RETURNS

IN A NORMAL POLITICAL campaign, controversy peaks on election day and then recedes. The March 28 election in El Salvador worked to the opposite effect. Political controversy over what the votes meant or even how many votes there were continues to build. As *Commonweal* noted in its June 4 editorial, "All sides try to squeeze the balloting into their pre-existing interpretations." Thus the State Department declared the election a triumph for its policy, then turned its attention to reversing the chief result of the vote—the weakening of the Christian Democrats and the strengthening of the right. Most of the American media claimed a "vote for peace" from an election in which the most striking success was gained by a man who planned the murder of archbishops and threatened the murder of American diplomats, Roberto D'Aubuisson. Opponents of American policy hastened to explain that the voters were terrorized by the need to have their *cedulas* (identity cards) stamped and by the potential vengeance of the death squads, but made little attempt to explain either the turnout or the results. For almost all American commentators, the election was treated as an exercise in the American debate rather than as an event in Salvadoran history.

Facts, of course, are slippery, yet it does help to know who voted and who didn't, what parties did well in which areas, how the election results compared to those in El Salvador's past. Using some election data from the Council on Hemispheric Affairs plus some knowledge of El Salvador's history, and trying to avoid squeezing the results into our own preconceptions, we would argue:

1. Despite all the current scandals, voter turnout was relatively high.

2. Officials in Washington and San Salvador inflated the vote totals to show that the guerrillas had been completely repudiated.

3. A close look at even the inflated figures points in the opposite direction, i.e., that the guerrillas retain real areas of strength.

4. The vote does not, however, support claims that the insurgents currently represent the majority of the people.

5. The results, which were a disaster for the people of El Salvador and for Washington policy-makers as well, were foreseeable, given previous election results and the circumstances of this balloting.

We will also offer some speculations on El Salvador's future and some reflections on the American penchant for expecting too much from wartime elections.

First, the turnout was remarkable. Using figures released by

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the San Salvador government before and during the elections, 115 percent of the eligible electorate voted. Election officials had been deflating the size of the electorate to make sure that the percentage turnout looked impressive. Actually a simple calculation would have indicated more than 2 million eligible voters, but the press never did the simple calculation nor did U.S. reporters notice the discrepancy between 1.3 million eligible and 1.5 million voting.

In a June 3 *New York Times* op-ed article, Thomas Sheehan, recently returned from a fact-finding mission to El Salvador, raised questions about the size of the vote. On June 4 and June 6, Raymond Bonner's *Times* dispatches from San Salvador reported on charges coming from El Salvador's largest university that the vote had been doubled. Dr. Jorge Bustamente, the head of the Elections Council, conceded to Bonner that "there might have been a ten-percent error" in counting voters. President Alvaro Magana denied any error or irregularities. Bonner said that the university critics, editors of *Central American Studies*, lacked hard proof, but he quoted unnamed sources in Salvadoran politics and in the diplomatic community who concurred with the criticisms. And the circumstantial evidence points to an inept job of padding the totals: at one San Salvador poll, 19 of 20 booths reported identical results; in Usulutan 17 of 18 booths at one polling place reported exactly 999 votes cast.

No one charges that the election results were rigged. The editors of *Central American Studies* conclude "that there was a pact between the United States, the political parties and army high command to respect the proportionality of the votes." "Above all," according to the editors, the point was "to prove the fundamental thesis that the Salvadoran people were against the guerrillas."

Estimates of how many people really voted range widely now. The official total stands at more than 1.5 million; Bustamante would now claim 1.35 million; the unidentified diplomats and politicians quoted by Bonner guess that the real turnout was between 900,000 and one million; the editors of *Central America Studies* estimate 600,000 to 800,000 votes.

In the hard-fought 1972 election, fewer than 800,000 Salvadorans cast votes. So *even the lowest estimates indicate a pretty good turnout*. On the other hand, although the inflated figures were meant to prove the guerrillas' weakness, *even the highest totals do not add up to a full repudiation of the guerrillas*.

Consider the results more closely. Highly developed, well-off, and densely populated provinces had up to three times the turnout rate of the poorer, "backwards" provinces. The highest turnout was in the provinces around San Salvador; the lowest rate of voting occurred in northern mountain provinces along the Honduran border. La Libertad, bordering San Salvador to the west, boasted the highest voter participation; it also rates second among all provinces in the percentage of elementary-age children enrolled in school (almost three-fourths enrolled). Morazan, the province lowest in turnout, has less than half its young children in school. La Libertad also has three times as many doctors per capita as Morazan. In Morazan and in similar economically underdeveloped provinces, the guerrillas are strong. Even with the inflated government figures on turnout, some areas emerge as clearly under the guerrillas' control.

There is one exception to this correlation between low economic development and low voter turnout. In Usulutan, the leading cotton-producing province, turnout was very low because war was raging. Despite all the U.S. media discussion of guerrilla interference with the voting, Usulutan was the only area where fighting on election day was above normal. Elsewhere the revolutionary opposition united in opposing the election but made no serious effort to disrupt the voting.

Duarte's Christian Democrats did well where turnout was high; D'Aubuisson's semi-fascist ARENA party did best with low turnout. Low turnout areas were probably the regions of greatest polarization with supporters of the left abstaining and opponents of the left choosing the most hard-line alternative. The Party of National Reconciliation (PCN) which ruled from 1961-1979 did well to the east of San Salvador. That's the area where the Indians were wiped out fairly early and where resistance to the oligarchs and before them to the Spanish has been low. The Christian Democrats ran strong west of San Salvador in the coffee-growing areas, in the provinces of the 1932 "Communist" uprising, and in areas where resistance to the landowner-military alliance represented by the PCN has been higher.

EL SALVADOR, contrary to the patronizing impression held by almost all Americans, is a country with a long history of contested elections and even of elections won by the opposition. The Christian Democrats held as many as 80 of the 261 municipalities (including San Salvador 1964-72) during the sixties, opposition parties elected 25 of the 52 Assembly members in 1968, and for a time in 1969-70 the Assembly was actually dominated by a coalition of Christian Democrats with dissident PCN members. In most elections, the strength of the social force supporting the rulers was great enough, particularly in the rural areas, to ensure a solid vote without cheating.

Nineteen-seventy-two was a turning point. In that year Duarte ran as the candidate of a united center-left coalition; his vice-presidential running mate was Guillermo Ungo, now the leader of the FDR. The official results gave Duarte 324,576 votes (43 percent) to 334,600 for the PCN candidate (44 percent). Two right-wing candidates split the remainder.

The PCN stole the election, but stole it by depriving Duarte of a few percent of the vote. There is no evidence that he won a *majority* of the vote that year even with the support of everyone from the Communists to the center. Unlike current U.S. policy-makers, Robert White, Carter's last ambassador to El Salvador, understood this history. He warned in advance that holding elections under present circumstances would prove disastrous. Why were the elections held?

From the Reagan State Department's point of view, the answer seems clear. Duarte and the Christian Democrats needed a boost. With a sweeping popular mandate, Duarte could control the army, halt some of the death squad activity,

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and move to consolidate a political base for victory over the guerrillas. A strong turnout would repudiate the left opposition and relieve pressures to begin negotiations.

Ten years ago Duarte "won" an election with less than a majority. This year his party got 41 percent of the valid votes, 36 percent of all votes cast. Combining his vote with the 11 percent blank ballots cast by supporters of the left, we get 47 percent, probably about the percent he received in 1972. In view of a major break with previous allies, the turmoil of a civil war, and the responsibility of governing at an impossible time, that's not much slippage in ten years.

Any belief that Duarte would do better rested on two sets of unrealistic assumptions: first, that he would pick up the votes which otherwise would go to the left because those voters had nowhere to go; and that this election could really resolve any fundamental issues in El Salvador.

Those assumptions seem all too widely shared outside the circles of the Reagan administration. On March 29, Congressman Toby Moffett (D., Conn.) spoke reverentially of the high turnout. In Congressional debate over Reagan's aid package, in continuing discussions in the press, those assumptions seem well nigh universal. Only at the extremes of the political spectrum do we find coherent views on the election put forward. In a letter to the *New York Times*, supply-side guru Jude Wanniski applauded the wisdom of the masses in opposing "the Maoist collectivization of Salvador's farms." He urged Reagan to recognize the vox populi and end land reform in El Salvador. James Petras, writing in the Leninist weekly *Guardian*, posed the tough questions for the left: why the high vote, why the vote for the right? He answered that contrary to much FDR propaganda, the murder in the countryside was not just the murder of random innocent civilians. Rather, the death squads had systematically killed the network of civilian supporters crucial to the guerrillas and the FDR. Scared and without leadership, the populace went to the right. Petras scorned as sentimental the further pursuit of liberal humanitarian support and urged the guerrillas' U.S. supporters to be clear about the ruthless nature of the civil war.

Wanniski and Petras recognize clearly that this *is* a civil war. And someone is going to lose. Following Wanniski's advice, the U.S. would simply arm D'Aubuisson and allies to the teeth and, if necessary, help them carry out a slaughter on the scale of the 1932 quelling of the "Communist" rebellion.

To be sure, that's the way the world has always worked in El Salvador. In fact, the current land reform follows, by just about one hundred years, government seizure of communal lands from their owners; that land was given to any proprietor who agreed to grow coffee. This early "land reform" of a capitalist sort was duly punctuated by five major peasant revolts from 1872-1898; each was violently suppressed.

If one were to remove the military force which has held El Salvador together, the result would be a genuine social revolution. So for each side, the stakes in this conflict are survival. Elections don't solve those kinds of problems. Witness U.S. elections in 1860.

And these particular elections did not even try. Elections were held on one side of a civil war. Duarte and his Christian Democrats had lost some key support. For example, in failing to prosecute the murderers of peasant leader Rudolfo Viera, the Christian Democrats lost the support of the UCS, the nation's largest peasant organization. The voters shrewdly judged that power rested with the army and the landowners, not with Duarte.

Under these conditions, negotiations become a difficult issue for the parties to Duarte's right. If the government bargains with the left, the dynamic will appear to have changed. The left, then, might be perceived as "winners." And any subsequent elections could be as different from this one as the election of Mugabe in Zimbabwe was from the election of Muzorewa in Rhodesia.

But for the U.S., the alternative to forcing negotiations now is all-out support of the PCN and eventually of D'Aubuisson. Such a course would then require a bloodier reenactment of the events of 1932 (or perhaps of Indonesia in 1965). If the State Department is correct that there is a Pol Pot left within the revolutionary opposition, prolonging the war would strengthen that tendency and its viciousness. At the end, whether "left" or "right" won, El Salvador would know peace—the peace of the graveyard.

Compared to other Americans commenting on El Salvador Petras and Wanniski seem clearsighted only because their conflicting ideologies tie them firmly to the military extremes, while most American policy-makers want to pretend that they can create a center by renaming the right. An open-ended negotiation, with all the major parties participating, might — probably would — fail, but less certainly so than present American policy. Unless the U.S. is willing to support D'Aubuisson's remedy of the physical elimination of the left and its constituents, then the left's existence must be acknowledged. Acknowledging that existence is not to acknowledge the left's right to rule — there is no evidence as yet that the left represents the majority of the society — but simply to acknowledge its right to participate in shaping El Salvador's future. It may well be that the present institutions of rule are too fragile to survive such an acknowledgment, but if that is so, the U.S. should not be propping up such institutions with its power and the blood of Salvadorans.

LET US CLOSE with a provocative comparison. Duarte was the Jimmy Carter of Salvadoran politics. As the candidate of the center, he expected to pick up the votes which had no where else to go. D'Aubuisson, like Reagan, appeared more dynamic. Abandoned voters on the left stayed home or voted for the more dynamic alternative.

The assumption that an election with the left excluded would lead to moderation was wrong in 1980 in the U.S. and in 1982 in El Salvador. Absent a left, you are soon absent a center.

JIM CHAPIN & JACK CLARK

(Jim Chapin is the Chair of World Hunger Year. Jack Clark is editor of Food Monitor *magazine. Both are former national directors of the Democratic Socialists of America.)*

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Can nuclear protest change policy?

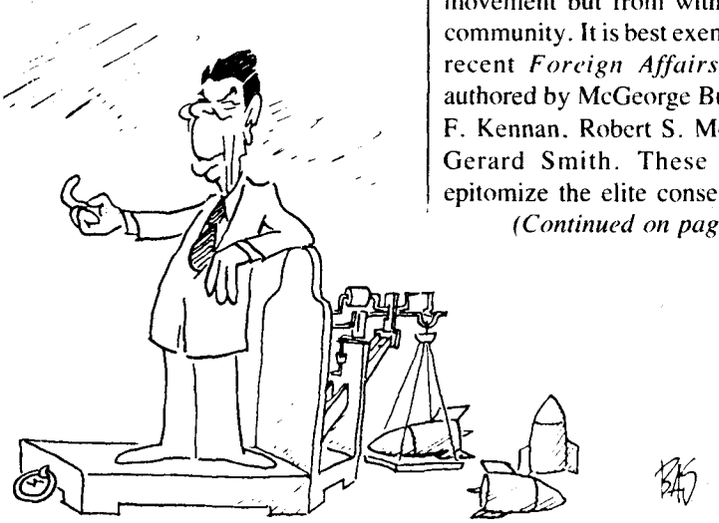
J. Bryan Hehir

THE NUCLEAR DEBATE is now fully joined in the United States. The protest movement against the arms race has produced the Reagan administration's response in the president's Eureka College address. The Kennedy-Hatfield freeze resolution has produced the Jackson-Warner freeze proposal. The peace movement can already claim a victory; it has posed the nuclear issue for public debate in a fashion which cannot be ignored. Few observers believe that either the president's proposals of last November or this May would have been forthcoming without the pressure of the peace movement. It is unlikely that either of the administration's proposals will defuse the movement but both of them testify to its impact. The debate which is now at full tide has two distinct dimensions: there is a *popular movement* against the nuclear arms race and there is a *policy debate* alongside the popular movement.

The popular movement is exemplified in the Nuclear Freeze initiatives, the Ground Zero Week, The Peace Pentecost sponsored on Memorial Weekend and the spate of activities surrounding the U.N. Special Session on Disarmament. The popular movement has produced a "democratization" of the nuclear debate, engaging large numbers of people in a discussion previously confined to government circles and a few research institutes. The popular dimension of the nuclear debate is today a mass movement: it is large, broad-based, non-technical in its pronouncements and pluralistic in its objectives, programs, and methods; thus far it constitutes a fragile but effective alliance of diverse groups focused on reversing the nuclear arms race.

The significance of the popular movement lies in the pace of its mobilization, the character of its constituency, and the signal it sends to the political process. The speed with which the nuclear protest movement has arisen indicates a sea-change in public opinion. In the spring of 1981, it was impossible to find anything but isolated voices in either House of Congress to question the Reagan administration's philosophy of the need to rearm in order to disarm. By the spring of 1982, challenging defense spending in the name of both budgetary frugality *and* security was a position most elected officials were willing to espouse. The change from 1981 to 1982 was not generated in Washington; it came from the popular movement of protest. Today the political leadership is seeking to catch up with public opinion on nuclear disarmament.

The power of the popular movement resides not only in its mass appeal but in some particular parts of its membership. It includes groups with a unique capacity to catalyze public opinion. The two most visible examples are religious leadership and medical doctors. Both carry a certain kind of authority and trust in the public mind; engaging that authority in a publicly visible fashion against the nuclear arms race is a major political event. It has already had its consequences. The symbolic significance, already evident, is the demonstration that a constituency exists in the American political process which is committed to reversing the arms race. Anyone familiar with efforts to pass SALT II or to move through the final steps of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty will recognize the value of a constituency for arms control and disarmament. Opponents of SALT and CTB have always been able to show opposition to both which seemed stronger than any public sentiment which arms-controllers could produce. The new popular movement has created a critical mass of public opinion which could have long-term political consequences.



The capacity for long-term impact may lie, however, with a strategy to link the popular movement to the policy debate now emerging on nuclear strategy. The policy debate has traditionally been an elite discussion, closed and consensual in character. It has involved a relatively few actors who accepted a set of well-defined premises. Administrations could change, political parties could come and go, but the fundamental ideas of U.S. nuclear strategy remained unchanged.

Today, the consensual character of the policy debate is being threatened. The threat comes not from the popular movement but from within the policy community. It is best exemplified in the recent *Foreign Affairs* article co-authored by McGeorge Bundy, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara and Gerard Smith. These four names epitomize the elite consensus on U.S.

(Continued on page 383)

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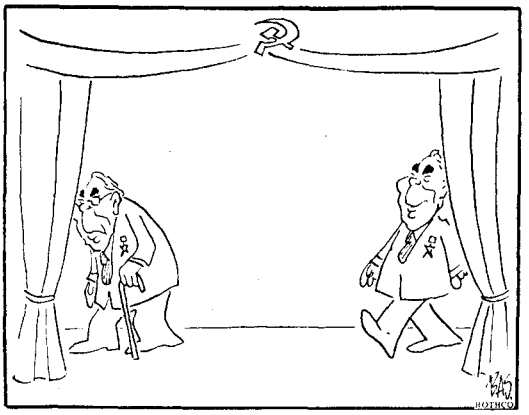

WILL IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE?

The Brezhnev succession

PEDRO RAMET

ABOUT FIVE YEARS AGO, when Brezhnev temporarily vanished from the stage on a private vacation on the Black Sea, Western newspapers quickly came forward with suggestions that Brezhnev might, in fact, have died and that perhaps his Kremlin colleagues were so pathologically insecure that they did not dare to announce the news.

This time the succession may be for real. There was, first of all, the publication, in the December 1981 issue of the Leningrad literary magazine, *Avrora*, of a satirical story about an aging and celebrated writer who "does not plan to die." Since Brezhnev is celebrated as the author of a number of books, the narrator's sardonic ending, in which he speaks of joy at the thought of the old writer's passing, was at once taken as a thrust at the seventy-five-year-old Brezhnev.

Then Moscow television ran footage, in mid-February, showing a tearful Brezhnev sobbing at the funeral of his long-term associate, Colonel-General Konstantin Grushevoi. This public depiction of weakness on the part of the General-Secretary is unprecedented. The fact that it was aired at all suggests that Brezhnev could not prevent it.

Third, there is the case of "Boris the Gypsy," the wealthy consort of Brezhnev's daughter Galina. He was abruptly arrested, about the same time, for illicit diamond trafficking and currency irregularities.

And finally, there is the fact that on March 3, Brezhnev and ten other senior Kremlin officials (including then-KGB chief Yuri Andropov, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, Party Control Chairman Arvid Pelshe, Defense Minister Dmitry Ustinov and General Department Head Konstantin Chernenko) ostentatiously attended a performance, at Moscow's Mkat theater, of Mikhail Shatrov's new play about Lenin's last days — which predictably has been interpreted as a comment on the impending Soviet succession. (It is a curious habit of Kremlin leaders to engage in these collective cultural respites in times of crisis — ostensibly to dispel any doubts as to the prospects of successful resolution of the crisis, by showing the complete lack of concern on the part of the leaders. Thus, as a crucial confrontation with Beria neared in June 1953, Khrushchev, Malenkov, Molotov, and several other leaders went off to the opera together. And again in October 1962, at the height of the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev found time to take in a little theater. So reliable is this pattern, however, that far from dispelling doubts, such collective visits to the theater *arouse* doubts and stimulate speculation.)

As the current succession drama unfolds, five leading contenders stand out: Andrei Kirilenko, 75, hitherto heir presumptive but in eclipse since Suslov's death in mid-January; Chernenko, 70, a Brezhnev protégé and the new heir presumptive; Viktor Grishin, 68, First Secretary of the Moscow City Party organization, Grigorii Romanov, 58, First Secretary of the Leningrad party organization; and Andropov, 68, though Andropov may be politically compromised on account of his KGB connection. Late in May, Andropov was elected to the nine-man party Secretariat which implements the day-to-day policies set by the Politburo. Only five men occupy positions in both the Politburo and the Secretariat — Brezhnev, the ailing Kirilenko, 51-year-old Mikhail S. Gorbachev (an agricultural specialist considered out of the running), Chernenko, and now Andropov. The politically astute Andropov enjoys a particularly strong position insofar as two of his leading rivals, Chernenko and Moscow's Grishin, are generally considered to be intellectually mediocre as well as deficient in relevant experience. Chernenko, most of whose career consisted of supervising propaganda in Moldavia, was described recently as a man better suited to selling transistor radios on a street corner; and Grishin has had little experience outside of trade union work and running the Moscow organization. Andropov, by contrast, served as Soviet ambassador to Hungary during the Soviet invasion of 1956 and later was entrusted with responsibility for relations with the Communist parties of the East bloc, before taking up the Chairmanship of the KGB in 1973.

Yet the question as to which particular individual will succeed Brezhnev is far less interesting — and less important — than the fact that the process of succession, regardless of the individuals involved, is likely to have both short-term and long-term impact on policy in the Soviet Union. That is to say,

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the succession issue is tied to the issue of the future evolution of the Soviet policy.

THERE ARE at least five reasons why political succession in the Soviet Union is important: first, because up to now, at least, leadership changes have also produced long-term policy shifts of some significance and thus are unavoidably associated with the expectation of policy shift; second, because elites behave differently when hierarchical relations are uncertain, reverting to patterns more appropriate to an underground revolutionary party; third, because succession conventionally takes four to seven years to complete, during which time short-term policy adjustments and structural innovations may be attempted; fourth, because political succession in the absence of agreed rules of succession reopens the question of legitimacy (at the simplest level, merely in the sense that there is no consensus on a "legitimate" successor, but also in the sense that the spectator is reminded that political routines in the USSR are the product of coercion, not of contract); and fifth, because succession brings to the surface, and accentuates, the unresolved issues of the day, among which, at the present time, economic stagnation, nationalities discontent, and the Polish contagion ought to be numbered.

..HE'S OLD, FRAIL AND WEAK.... IT'S TIME BREZHNEV TURNED HIS POSITION OVER TO ONE OF THE YOUNGER POLITBURO MEMBERS....
..THAT IS ONE OF THE YOUNGER POLITBURO MEMBERS!

In the short run it is most probable that Brezhnev's heirs will simply continue to implement Brezhnev's reasonably successful policy formulae, i.e., to continue to place a premium on stability, on oligarchical rule, on preservation rather than innovation, and on development of military and heavy industry rather than on consumer industry. Yet some of the Brezhnev formulae are already obsolete — among them, the endeavor to effect a steady improvement in the lot of the average Soviet citizen (the Kremlin will be hard put simply to keep the economic situation from worsening measurably), and the ambiguous approach to the nationalities question, in which the continuation of policies and programs smacking of Russification has been combined with concessions to the regional elites (a balance which has repeatedly failed to achieve the desired effect, as the Kremlin's firing of high-ranking officials in Ukraine, Armenia and elsewhere in the 1970s amply demonstrates). Hence, if the policy does not change in substance, it is likely to change in its effects, as the context itself changes. The notion of 'Brezhnevism without Brezhnev' is, thus, apt to be a mirage.

It could be expected that at least some Soviet leaders will come to the same conclusion relatively quickly. Even aside from the circumstance that new remedies may appear imperative, the Soviet political elite currently consists, as Columbia Professor Seweryn Bialer recently pointed out, of four generational-attitudinal groups, whose basic assumptions were shaped in good part by their experiences at the time they rose in the hierarchy. These are: the Great Purge generation (including Brezhnev himself), the war generation, the late-Stalin generation, and the post-Stalin generation. The entire Great Purge generation, which has kept its hands on the levers of power, will, in the space of the next few years, largely pass from the scene. Its heirs may well prove more conservative, less inclined to either populism or egalitarianism, and less attracted to the grand designs and grand visions conjured by Marxist-Leninist ideology. Yet if one were to pinpoint the two elements in the situation most productive of change, one might underline, first, the political fluidity entailed in the succession period, and second, the current economic and political problems which promise to transform the context in which policy is made.

LOOKING BEYOND Brezhnev, therefore, it is tempting to reject the conventional wisdom of the 1970s, which held that the Soviet Union was capable of a lengthy period of virtual stagnation—a view which conjured an image of the Soviet Union as uniquely resistant to both external and internal pressures, and which thus ironically resurrected the notion of changelessness associated with the totalitarian approaches to the Soviet polity of the 1950s—and to return to a somewhat earlier supposition that at a certain point in its evolution, the Soviet system would enter a period of decay. There are a number of indications that the Soviet Union may in fact be

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entering a period of gradual decay.

First, there is the widespread apathy and alienation stimulated by an ideology which mocks the oppressed by describing the state as a "workers' state" and the system as a kind of "paradise on earth." Soviet citizens are cynical about their own press and have in recent years tallied the world's steepest increase in alcohol consumption, leading Soviet public health specialists to worry of societal degeneration through alcoholism. Again, a survey published in a Soviet professional journal last year disclosed that only 58 percent of draft-age respondents felt positive about the prospect of serving in the Soviet armed forces. On the other hand, Soviet elites worry that Western cultural infiltration may be sapping "Soviet socialist patriotism" and repeatedly condemn the fad among youth for wearing Western T-shirts, the appearance of Americanisms in increasing numbers in Russian-language conversation, and even the popularization of Western rock tunes. As if this were not enough, many non-Jews now speak openly of their desire to leave the Soviet Union.

Second, there is the demographic problem. Birth rates are slumping everywhere but in Central Asia, and the Central Asians are the least skilled in Russian and almost without exception disinclined to migrate out of Central Asia, and thus of limited utility for continued national economic development. In addition to slumping birth rates, infant mortality and male mortality are, on the other side, both rising. The result is that while some thirty million new workers will have entered the labor force in the USSR in 1970-1985, only an estimated five million are expected to enter the labor force between 1985 and 2000. Historically, declining birthrates and shrinking labor forces have been associated with the decline and decay of empires.

Third, interethnic tensions in the Soviet Union not only are not going away, but in several critical regions are in fact tangibly worsening. Violent anti-Russian demonstrations have swept the Baltic republics during the last decade, hitting Lithuania in 1972, Latvia in 1977, and Estonia in 1976, 1978 and 1980. All of these republics have active underground secessionist groups, as does the Ukraine. Even Orthodox Georgia was rocked by anti-Russian demonstrations in the course of 1981. In addition, partly as a result of developments in Iran and Afghanistan, the Soviet elite is increasingly worried about an Islamic revival spreading to its own forty-three million Muslims. A brochure written by Nursakhat Bairamsakhatov, chief of the Turkmen Communist Party's Department of Propaganda and Agitation, revealed that Turkmen-language religious broadcasts by Iran's Radio Gorgan, were being listened to regularly by Soviet Turkmen and that they were having a measurable impact on Turkmen Islamic consciousness. That the numbers of incidents of Turkmen-Russian confrontations and "incidents" began to rise sharply about the same time can only have deepened Kremlin worries.

Fourth, various observers have reported the spread of a religious revival among the Christian communities of the USSR over the past ten to fifteen years. This trend, linked in Russia with the anti-Communist neo-Slavophile movement, appears to be viewed with particular anxiety by Moscow, to judge from the sporadic intensified anti-religious campaigns being unleashed.

Fifth, there is the fact of rising crime in the Soviet Union as elsewhere. In Latvia, for instance, a recent session of the Riga City Soviet highlighted the seriousness of "hooliganism," warned that juvenile crime was on the rise, and called for a "law and order" campaign to roll back crime.

Sixth, there are the sundry economic afflictions with which the Soviet system appears incapable of dealing effectively — including bottlenecks and irrationalities of allocation in central planning, distortions resulting from the system of fixing prices, the lack of profit incentives and resultant low labor productivity, the obstruction of innovation by bureaucratic procedures and by the failure to adequately reward innovation, and the sheer conviction on the part of some that the system is unworkable. Add to that the economic strain imposed by commitments to sustain the economies of Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Vietnam and Cuba, by the sizable aid already given to Poland, and by the continuing wars in Afghanistan and Kampuchea and you have the makings of trouble. West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher commented recently: "There can be no doubt that the international commitments of the Soviet Union extend far beyond their capability of economic assistance."

And finally, there is the virtual petrification of the gerontocratic oligarchy — exacerbated by Brezhnev's practice of replacing retiring or deceased colleagues with men as old as or older than their predecessors. Vilfredo Pareto, the Italian sociologist, once observed that no system can survive unless it refreshes itself with the constant recruitment of new blood into the elite.

Hence, the Brezhnev succession may prove to be as potent in effect as the preceding Soviet successions. Yet in linking the succession with the issue of political decay, it is important to keep in mind that the decay of empires has tended, historically, to be gradual in its early stages — and thus often barely perceptible — taking as long as three hundred years or more (as in the case of the Ottoman Empire) to complete. When, however, the system in question suffers as well from an unresolved problem of legitimacy — as is the case, I would argue, with the Soviet Union — the process of decay may be sharply accelerated; and insofar as a leadership succession may revive the legitimacy issue, the succession process has the potential to contribute to instability and decay.

CORRECTION

Through inadvertence, the by-line of the co-author of "The Town Where Integration Worked" did not appear with the article in our last issue (June 4, 1982). He is Sam Mancuso, formerly Director of Housing in Calumet Park, Illinois, and now the Director of Community Services for Will County Community Action Agency. We apologize to Mr. Mancuso and ask readers to note his co-authorship.

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The future of our fellowship

JAMES TUNSTEAD BURTCHAELL

THERE ARE TWO tumultuous changes shortly to be accomplished within our church that will transform the life of vowed communities as much as any of the restoration changes we have undergone since Vatican II, and perhaps more so. First, the Latin church will reform its recruitment process for ordaining those who hold leading office in the churches. Second, the missionary enterprise (also of the Latin church) will collapse so as to permit a firmer establishment of the faith in areas where missions are presently the faith's major impediment. Let me elaborate on these two changes, or upheavals, in order.

There is, I should think, fair unanimity regarding the qualities we desire in those who hold the offices of bishop and presbyter and, with some adaptation, that of deacon. We want them to be devout and to be articulate about their faith; courageous yet compassionate; humble and gracious at the same time that they call us smartly to our duties; impressive in their personal lives; responsible with community resources; attentive listeners when counseling; vivid and rousing from the pulpit; and gently forgiving when they walk through our consciences. Almost anyone could compose his or her own roster of requirements, and I take it that it would be configured somehow not unlike the one I have offered. Paul wanted his officers to be men of irreproachable character, married but once, and with children who were disciplined and believing; men who were not arrogant nor hot-tempered; nor heavy drinkers nor insolent; nor out to make money; but hospitable, and instinctively warm to all that is good, sensible, moral, devout, and self-controlled; and he wanted them to have a firm grasp of the unchanging message of the tradition.

Throughout the church and its generations, we have, and have had, a generally shared profile of essential requirements for those who are ordained to serve by convening and leading us. Among all matters touching our common welfare this has not been one upon which we have often fallen out in disagreement. The problem is that we have not in fact been recruiting people with these graced qualities.

Two very special qualifications, one included from the very beginning and the other added well afterwards, have had the practical effect of crowding all the others aside, or of reclassifying them all from "essential" to "desirable" (which means "optional"). By choosing to ordain only males, and only celibate males, to office within the church, we have so reduced the pool of possible or plausible candidates that, instead of searching for those who best live up to the total profile, we must be content with those who apply and who do not exhibit the grosser signs of unfitness. No matter what configuration of virtues we may say we require of clergy, if we first require they be male and celibate then we are in effect making those two qualifications so determinative that we forfeit most others.

To squint at this problem with some perspective, let us imagine that membership in American symphonic orchestras were restricted to Americans of full Japanese ancestry. Auditions would continue to be held, but the standard of performance would inevitably deteriorate: not because Japanese are less capable musicians, or that they are uncooperative colleagues, but since, there being relatively so few to choose from, one must pay the price of mediocrity for imposing that first discriminating requirement. Male celibates are as able as any others for ordained ministry. But if the church chooses to recruit only among them, it will have to content itself with quite a few clergy who in open competition would not display many of those other qualities we had first hoped for.

There are other results of this discrimination. Not only are most clergy recruited with little realistic attention to the essential criteria for office, but the church is so dependent on the readiness of enough males to be celibate and to serve as clergy that many Catholics in the world are left to hunger for the Lord's Supper. The church has put itself into some embarrassment. On the one hand, we insist that weekly participation in the Eucharist is needful for Christian survival (indeed, ordering it as a mortal obligation) and urge that no obstacle be put in the way of those who wish to share in it every day. On the other hand, we fail to provide Christian communities all over the world with worthy presbyters enough to preside at the Eucharist.

In a word, the church has virtually left its leadership at the

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mercy of such as care to apply with the minimal requirements. Whatever its merits, this rule has not provided the church with clergy in adequate numbers or of adequate virtue.

THE DISMAY THAT THIS might otherwise cause has been assuaged somewhat by the popular belief and teaching (I call it popular, not because it is held widely by the people, but because many theologians believe it is) that holy orders confer the powers and graces to lead Christ's church. This is, I fear, one of those instances wherein theology has defied experience, and not credibly. Most Christian people have observed that bishops, presbyters, and deacons come away from ordination not notably more powerful in the Spirit than when they approached the altar. It is not that the people are unable to recognize the onset of spiritual power. We know what happens to men and women when they undergo a moral conversion, or when they recover from alcohol addiction, or when they prepare themselves peacefully for an unexpected death. These are some of the moments when persons rise visibly towards the full stature of Christ. But this is not what we see happening in ordination. We would say, if left to our simpler but graced wisdom, that spiritual powers are not conferred by ordination. It is responsibility, not power, that is conferred. And our common good requires that this responsibility be given to those whom God appears to have endowed with the requisite powers. Those powers are the graced qualities we all look for in the ordained. We need to look for them before they are ordained, or we shall not be likely to find them after. Ordination gives people an *officium*: an office, a position of duty within the church. One of the duties of those in high office is to recruit as their collegial comrades those who display the powers, or virtues, that their duties require.

Those who think that an ordaining bishop bestows power on the powerless create a cluster of theological difficulties. For one thing, they are quite selective about how this empowerment is to be verified. A presbyter, for instance, is said to be given the power unfailingly to take bread and wine and to set before the church Christ's body and blood: unfailingly. But if one were to put his orders to the test by noting how effectively he preaches the word of God, which is another charismatic task with which ordination has charged him, the effect of the bishop's hands and the impress of the Spirit are not so unfailing. One way of explaining this is to say that the power of orders is to accomplish these duties validly, if not effectively. One is left without much hope, however, for powers from the Spirit that lead to valid but impotent results.

A second theological difficulty follows upon the way people define holy orders. A deacon is said to be given powers that a layperson lacks; the presbyter is given a wider range of powers; and the bishop receives power in its plenitude. Each rank is invited to define itself by certain actions which its incumbents can perform: powers denied to those of lower rank. The result is that the cleric imagines himself to be personally possessed of powers that are essential for the welfare of the church, powers which do not depend upon his own surrender to the grace of Christ. The result is a powerful temptation to feel relieved of any very compelling call to holiness, for even if one hearkens but halfheartedly to that call, still one enjoys a monopoly on that full range of wonderful acts that provide the Spirit to the church. This has not been a temptation, I would observe, that we have shown ourselves ready to vanquish. And so this beguiling theology of empowerment has ironically rendered still more impotent the already mediocre incumbents whom our restrictive recruitment has accepted into offices that were meant to provide the church with Christlike leadership.

MY EXPECTATION is that the church will no longer think it well to abide by that discipline or by the doctrine it requires. There are today men and women, young and old, well tried already or asking to be tried, who are possessed, as far as one can judge, of exactly those qualities we yearn for in our ordained ministers. They are willing to make service in Christ their life's work. They would find the joy of it more precious than the larger income their talents could earn elsewhere. And they are vigorously taking on the ministries to which they now have access. Many of them have been at this long enough that their powers have endured the tests of adulthood. When one asks them to accept a larger responsibility one is not taking the sort of risk that comes from accepting young people directly out of school. These men and women have flown their flags, they have run many laps on the course. They are as widely spread as is the church. The churches in Ghana can number them; so can the churches in Indonesia and Canada and Peru and Italy. Were we to ask some of them to accept ordination to the offices of leadership, to preside at the church's work and worship, they would be chosen precisely because they showed the grace of state which the ordained should have, and which they should have before they are ordained. Further still, they would define themselves, not as newly empowered to do things which Catholics of lower rank and order could not do, but as newly responsible to lead those in every rank in the things that all Christians must do together. The presbyter would not claim to be celebrating a Mass to which others were invited. He or she would convene the Christian community and preside rightfully at the Eucharist that was the celebration of them all.

We are all familiar with the fresh inrush of fellow believers into ministries which they perform with grace and excellence. They are catechists and directors of religious education; they prepare fiancés for marriage, counsel couples through their family strains, and even staff the tribunals that inquire into marital nullity; they distribute the Eucharist and care for the sick; they preach; they teach; they tend the tradition as theologians; they marry and bury and baptize. Not only do they stand in as surrogates or lieutenants for the deacons and priests who are absent: they stand beside them and sometimes outdo them at tasks essential to the growth of Jesus in the church. There are today many times more such people ready to give themselves to Christ's ministries. They require only a hint of welcome, to offer themselves.

What we face — imminently — is not a strange and unsettling time when familiar customs and usages will be swept

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aside. We face a time when the church will see itself possessed of a bounty of believers graced by Christ with just those qualities we have always clamored for, and possessed of the freedom for us to recruit them, according to their respective capacities, for appropriate service, even in the offices that have long gone begging. This is not to say that we anticipate some golden age when God will be more generous than before in breathing his Spirit into the church. What will be different is that we shall be accepting into office those he has inspired for it, rather than those few we had insisted on preferring. It will be as if Samuel had finally and reluctantly passed by the beguiling elder brothers and come at last to David, and realized that the Spirit would not agree to inspire just anyone the leader chose to anoint; rather, it was his duty to anoint the one God had already chosen and filled with his breath.

A SECOND TUMULTUOUS change we might foresee is a reform in our missionary endeavors. I must confess that I never met a missionary. If a missionary is one sent from a mature community to an unchurched area, to plant the faith there and raise up a church that can provide for its own continuance, then I have never met a missionary. I know of no one who really wanted to leave a mission church to its own devices. Every missionary has acknowledged that his operation should fold its tent and leave the local church on its own, but somehow this has always been scheduled to occur sometime after that particular missionary's death or retirement. To be a missionary is to have one's departure date already set.

Missionaries have commonly been of two sorts. Some came from countries that were economically, technologically, and culturally more developed; and they found it difficult to accept that their congregations might ever be sophisticated enough to do without them except at great loss. Others came from countries that overproduced clergy, and went as *Gastarbeiter* to countries that could afford them. They stood to lose their support by going home. Both classes of missionary, the Americans in Kenya and the Irish in Los Angeles, have had some vested interest in an inability of the churches they served to supply their own ordained leadership.

What I anticipate too is that churches everywhere, not only out of a surge of nationalism, but from their reading of the New Testament, will thank those who first wakened the faith among them (or more likely the third-generation successors of those who first wakened that faith) and those who generously staffed their institutions, and will then ask to manage their own affairs: not, perhaps, with the financial outlay that their supplying churches have thought needful, but with what seems best and available to them. Then they may invite some brothers and sisters from abroad to come and help serve (not rule), with special gifts and experience that they have to bring, but not, one hopes, with the cash that would permit them to purchase forbearance and courtesy and intimidation.

This second change will bring forward the grand movement supported boldly by Paul VI: the conversion of churches which, in some cases for centuries, have been held in subordinate and immature status. Any who do go abroad in the name of Christ will have to do so with clearly transient status, and will have to serve at the pleasure of those whom they call to community. Once their word has taken root and the Gospel has flowered into Eucharist, mission is over and the missioner must move on or change status to that of foreign auxiliary.

I HAVE DESCRIBED, at some length, eventualities that may not appear on their face to touch the lives of members of vowed brotherhoods and sisterhoods in Christ. But now let me suggest how, in fact, they will overturn our lives, and bless them.

Many members entered vowed brotherhoods in order to become priests. They wished to be ordained, and preferred the companionship of our communities to what they foresaw as a more isolate life in the secular priesthood. When holy orders in the church begin to incorporate those who most qualify for them, without requiring the further restrictions of maleness and celibacy, it is reasonable to expect that many men who would have joined us will no longer have the same incentive for doing so. They did not come into our communities because the celibate brotherhood drew them, as an alternative to marriage and family. They came to do the work of priests. In the future many of them will most likely choose marriage and family, and priesthood besides. Indeed, if a probationary service in various ministries should become normal before one is asked into presiding office, then priesthood will be conferred well beyond the ordinary age for marriage decisions.

John Coleman and others have noted that the ordained male celibate clergy has taken to itself almost the entire complex of ministries in the church. It may, of course, be as true to say that the church burdened them with these tasks for want of any other volunteers. But whatever the many causes, the observation needs to be expanded. Religious orders, first those of men in the high middle ages, and then those of women in the seventeenth century, also came into possession of certain works in the church, including notably hospitals, schools, foreign missions, the nurture of orphans and the rehabilitation of delinquent children, care of the elderly, custody of church properties, and others. There is hardly a ministry among these which is not presently open to laypeople without their needing to enter vowed communities. Since a good number of our brothers and sisters were surely drawn into community by these particular forms of service, and since Catholics today are free to take them up without having to forego marriage and children, it also stands to reason that significant number of men and women will no longer be seeking entry into our fellowships.

For those who do come, the traditional categories among and between vowed men and women will continue to dissolve. Monastic communities have already been reforming the distinction between choir monks and laybrothers: in most abbeys nowadays all monks are of a single class. The older orders of religious women have merged their extern sisters into the ranks of the fully professed. In many clerical communities, lay brothers have been moving from the blue-collar, intramural work they customarily did into active ministry, not only to

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their confreres but to the church and world. We shall be seeing the dissolution of the distinction between clerical and lay congregations. Some monastic orders of men have already discontinued the routine ordination of choir monks, recognizing that there was no presbyteral work for them to perform and that ordination had long served only to establish the choir monks in a more genteel caste than their brethren. But before long all communities, of men and of women, will contain an amalgam of members. Those communities in active service will deploy their members in a wide assortment of ministries, with some being called, as needs and talents provide, into the presbyteral college, and then occasionally into the episcopal college (without, I hope, the effective estrangement from their communities which now, in law and in fact, draws our confrere bishops away).

Rank and status in the church and its ministries will no longer be the force sustaining our vowed membership as once they were. We shall share out the monopolies, clerical and regular, which we have for so long enjoyed (and endured) over the church's more venturesome and attractive works. I foresee that this will work to our advantage. Our life and role in the church has been denatured, and needs to be restored. We have been seen as a cadre, both ascetical and privileged, that had first option on leadership and ministry in the church. We who were vowed religious claimed to be, and were supposed to be, those who took their faith most seriously, while secular folk (and in that grouping we included, both technically and really, secular clergy along with secular laity) sat to their religion more lightly. What will emerge, when our monopoly is relieved, is that life in vowed communities properly has, as its raison d'être, not certain ministries, or even a privileged status in the church's mission, but fidelity in the brotherhood or sisterhood as an alternative to marriage. To put it in familiar though not entirely appropriate terms, our religious communities will emerge more clearly as our family, not our career.

OUR VOWS WILL be seen, in the clarity of reform, as pledges to make a familial life in common. Our vow of celibacy, or chastity, is to be understood not simply as a renunciation of marriage and childbearing but as a promise, for the sake of the kingdom, to make family among a brotherhood or sisterhood. We promise to protect that sworn fellowship from rival affections or separative privacies. We leave our father and mother to bind ourselves fast to specific partners for life, to make them our closest kinsmen and kinswomen in the Lord.

Our vow of poverty is less a renunciation of property itself than it is a promise, to our kinsmen or kinswomen, to share evenly all that we hold in common, and to give away evenly what we do not need for a frugal life together. We renounce separative privacy or furtive possessiveness, by surrendering all we have to a common purse. The obligation of poverty in our communities is not significantly different from the even sharing and the generous giving which any family that marries in Christ is also bound to.

Our vow of obedience, too, is not so much a forfeiting of our own will to do that of our superiors, as it is the yielding to our brotherhood or sisterhood of our right to pursue our own private course in life. Decisions that affect the fellowship, and its service to church and world, must belong to all, by whatever political process the commonality is achieved. What is essential is that each of us as individuals acquiesce in the common will.

The older Benedictine tradition, with its twofold commitment of vowed fidelity (*stabilitas*) and ongoing rededication (*conversio morum*) is just as obviously centered on the creation of a common life. The primary goal of our pledges is not to create a cadre of church workers, detached and freed for action. We are first of all *attached:* attached to one another in a common life as demanding as Christian marriage is demanding. Our first pledge is to one another, to cleave close in a fellowship so bound up with our vocation and destiny that we cannot expect to draw any closer to Christ than we succeed in supporting one another.

We have renounced individual possessions in a fellowship that professes to live sparingly and generously. We have promised to live in a fellowship that knows no exclusive in-groups, and that fashions family out of people whatever their previous disposition to friendship might have been. We have promised to work in concert with our community in ways that would forfeit our individual preferences. Our hope, in yielding up our individual lives in favor of a life shared, is so very similar to that of men and women who do the same in Christian marriage. Each way of life involves sacrifice and asceticism. Yet each way of life is taken, not primarily as one of renunciation, but as one of kinship and belonging and joy.

I WOULD LOOK ALSO to a restoration of a healthier balance between common life and work. The past decades have witnessed a wonderful development in our potentialities in the ministry. The sacraments are in a tongue unloosed now, and can be celebrated with an imagination and an integrity that release more of their grace and power than in times before. We have become more proficient in counseling, more professional in ministry to the sick, more savvy in ministry to the poor, more knowledgeable in the political and economic realities that impinge upon faith, more free to inquire and to publish in the field of learning, more capable of mingling effectively in open society where once we were more shy and awkward.

We have not got this without price, though. We have become more secularized, unmoored from the single-minded vision of love that we keep alive only by gazing into the eyes of Jesus crucified. And we have become fatigued, dissipated, worn down by the helter-skelter pace of our ministries that have taken us away from our brothers and sisters. We, the very ones who chide doctors and lawyers for being consumed by their work to the neglect and eventual collapse of their families, have done the very same thing. We have been so exhilarated by our ministry, so addicted to our work, that our community prayer and companionship have withered. Enough of us are wearied of that weariness, which ironically has come to us through the marvelous opportunities in our ministry, for

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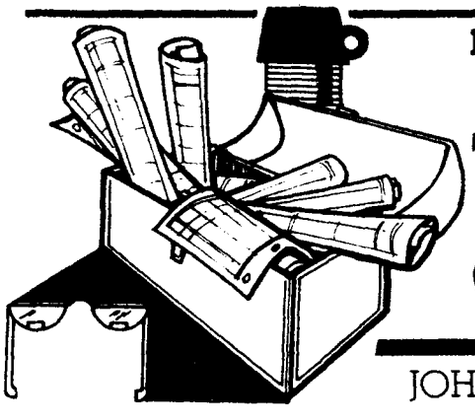
us to sense the need for one another's close companionship in leisure and in worship, the highest leisure.

Much of what has been disedifying lately in our observance of the vows may then find reform. We have allowed ourselves great liberties in the possession and ostentation of property and even luxury. We have sought closest friendships and intimacies beyond the circle of our brothers and sisters, and in ways that are sometimes separative. We have fretted about our own individual fulfillment and ensured that we could not be cornered by anyone else's imperatives or priorities. Partly we have been drawn into this by throwing our hearts perhaps too hungrily into our work, and by the gratifications of ego that the work brings. A recovery of the asceticism proper to our lives will be precisely a return to our home life, a surrender of frenetic, individual preferences to the closer claims of our life in common.

After this has come to pass I would foresee a redefinition by vowed communities of those ministries to which they want to give themselves in a special way. Our brothers and sisters have been scattering into solo ventures that deplete whatever wisdom and corporate force we might bring to the apostolate. And one reason for their doing it was the earlier wastage of our energies in institutional services that were no longer really washing the feet of the world. There is little sense in joining a brotherhood or sisterhood and wasting one's work on marginal service, or in parting ways so that each of us can find an individual career and private satisfaction. Our strength is in our numbers, and in our freedom to be deployed easily, and in our ability to confront larger needs with institutional services, and in our capacity as community to support some of our members in work that brings little or no income, and in our capacity, as a continuing family, to accumulate experience and perspective and expert acquaintance with ministries that require special proficiency. Our task must not be simply to ensure that all of our employable members are placed and are comparatively happy. We shall have to explore the needs of the world, and find those to which our energies and personnel and corporate strength make us more apt to be helpful. This is likely to result in some significant rearrangements of ministry and training for many congregations.

I HAVE SUGGESTED reasons why many who might otherwise have been recruited into religious orders for ministry's sake will no longer be joining us, and how this is doubly so for clerical communities. But I am not so sure that our numbers will dwindle drastically. From the church's perspective, we shall not need to be so numerous because we shall no longer be so crucial as her service source. But I think we shall be happier. We shall cherish our companionship more, and turn to our work more sanely, and walk the road more simply as benevolent bands of brothers and sisters. To do that is not to dwindle.

Any attempt to secure a prophetic reconnaissance into the future resists a conclusion. The range of sight stretches out ahead of our vision. But to sum up, if not to conclude, I would see a great freedom lying before us. Not the freedoms of a lesser sort that Vatican II has already given: freedom from the confinements of uniformity and arbitrary authority and inept professionalism and the suppression of dissent. Our forthcoming freedom is at once a freedom for us and one for the church: the ministries which we have had to ourselves are to be released to the full range of the church's membership in the hope that the most qualified and generous and graced will find their way toward them. We shall then be free to turn more companionably towards our vowed brothers and sisters and to reconstruct a more sustaining common life together, better in prayer and in edification and even in recreation. We shall have the energy and the wits to gather forces and redeploy ourselves where we can characteristically be of most help, working side by side.



MAKING WAGE-EARNERS PARTNERS

The marvels of Mondragon

JOHN C. CORT

NOTHING IS MORE embarrassing to the journalistic mind than the taint of gullibility. Nevertheless, one day recently, as I sat in a lecture hall at Harvard's Institute of Politics, I was tempted to repeat Lincoln Steffens's glad cry, "I have been over into the future, and it works." I was watching a BBC documentary about Mondragon, a town in the Basque country of Spain that has become the center of the most impressive success story in the history of workers' cooperatives, a history that has been marked by lofty rhetoric but few solid successes.

In the early nineteenth century Christian socialists in France, led by Philippe Buchez, produced some modest results with cooperatives of Parisian craftsmen. Robert Owen, a more

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secular idealist but a much better manager, dazzled the world with his big textile mill at New Lanark, Scotland, but when he tried his New Harmonies in Indiana during the 1820s, the music turned discordant. The right blend of idealism and pragmatism had clearly not been discovered.

In mid-century Christian socialists like the English clergymen, Frederick Maurice and Charles Kingsley, experimented with cooperative associations of workingmen in London, but their efforts were even more "dwarfish" (Marx's word) and short-lived than those of Buchez in France.

In 1848, the same year that Marx and Engels were pushing socialism in the direction of nationalization of productive property in their *Communist Manifesto*, John Stuart Mill was making a counter-statement in behalf of another form of social ownership. Few people since then have expressed more eloquently the advantages of an "association of the laborers themselves on terms of equality, collectively owning the capital with which they carry on their operations." In this day of declining productivity in relation to our industrial rivals in Europe and Japan, Mill's words should provoke some interest.

He wrote, "The mode in which cooperation tends . . . to increase the productiveness of labor, consists in the vast stimulus given to productive energies by placing the laborers, as a mass, in a relation to their work that would make it their principle and their interest (at present it is neither) to do the utmost, instead of the least possible, in exchange for their remuneration. It is scarcely possible to rate too highly this material benefit, which yet is as nothing compared with the moral revolution in society that would accompany it: the healing of the standing feud between capital and labor; the transformation of human life, from a conflict of classes struggling for opposite interests, to a friendly rivalry in the pursuit of a good common to all; the elevation of the dignity of labor; a new sense of security and independence in the laboring class; and the conversion of each human being's daily occupation into a school of the social sympathies and the practical intelligence" (*Principles of Political Economy*, Book IV, Chapter VII, Section 6).

Over the years since then apostles of producer cooperation have been able to point to a few effective demonstrations of Mill's principles in England, a few more in France, still more in Italy and Israel, and even more in Poland, where 800,000 workers were involved by last report.

In America producer co-ops have been successful mainly among farmers as marketing associations. In 1970 there were 5,015 with 3,133,000 members, more than half of all farmers, doing business to a total of $15 billion. In the stricter sense of cooperatives of workers directly producing goods or services, success has marked the efforts of plywood co-ops in the Pacific Northwest and refuse-collecting enterprises in the San Francisco area. Otherwise it has been a case of "dwarfish" results or failure resulting from inadequate capital, incompetent management, faulty structure, weak commitment by worker-members, or all of the above.

At Mondragon, however, the formula for success seems to have been discovered and practiced to a degree unknown

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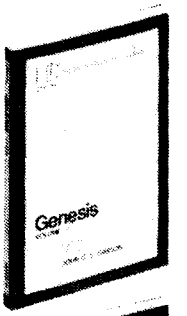

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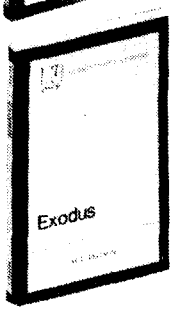

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anywhere else in the world. Herewith some data to support that statement:

Since its founding in 1956 by Father José Maria Arizmendi the Mondragon Group has produced 76 industrial co-operatives with 15,621 members, five service cooperatives with 1,500 members; one bank and research center, with 93 branches and 206,841 depositors; 14 housing co-ops; 36 school co-ops and one technical college; one consumer and four agriculture cooperatives. The total number of full-time working members is in excess of 28,000. There is almost no turnover. Salaries (called "advances") start at the prevailing wage for the area and go to a top, for the highest executives, of no more than three times the lowest salary. Retirement is at full pay plus an accumulated share of the profits, which in 1978 could be as much as $40,000 for one member.

These are not artsy-craftsy enterprises that feature high labor intensity. One of them has nearly 3,500 employees (too big, they have concluded now) and is the largest producer of electric stoves and refrigerators in all Spain. Most are capital-intensive and operate with sophisticated technology.

On the basis of one-worker-one-vote the members of a Mondragon co-op elect the board of directors, and the board selects a general manager for a term of four years. He then has the same freedom and responsibility to manage that would characterize a conventional firm, at least one with a union contract.

What is perhaps most extraordinary about Mondragon is the fact that among all these diversified enterprises, which are now scattered thoughout the Basque provinces, there has been only one failure: a small fishing co-op. Compare that with the average rate of failure among capitalist enterprises.

As I watched the film at Harvard I was also tempted to exclaim, "I have seen the future, and it is beautiful!" This in reaction to the shots of handsome buildings and landscapes that mark the central operations in the town of Mondragon. Another thing that struck me was the sequence showing a meeting of the board of directors of the *Caja Laboral Popular* (Bank of the People's Labor), the financial, research, and organizational hub around which the Mondragon Group revolves. The room, in furniture and style, looked like any board room in a successful American corporation, but none of the men around the table was wearing a suit. The standard dress was slacks and a sweater. As much as anything else this homely fact impressed me with the democratic, worker-oriented nature of the Mondragon phenomenon.

Father Arizmendi, who died in 1976, must have been an extraordinary man. Before becoming a priest he had fought on the Loyalist side in the Spanish civil war, been captured by Franco's troops and at one point was under sentence of death. Assigned by his bishop to work with the young people of Mondragon, many of whom were unemployed, Arizmendi concluded that what they needed was technical training. In 1943 he persuaded one-quarter of the town's residents to contribute to the foundation of a technical college. What he himself taught the students, besides an emphasis on competence and an impatience with theory divorced from practice, was the social teaching of the church, including that passage from *Quadragesimo Anno* that encourages partnership arrangements whereby "wage-earners are made sharers in some sort in the ownership, or the management, or the profits."

It was therefore natural that when five of his students earned their engineering degrees and had picked up some experience in a conventional firm, they should decide to start their own business (1956) making stoves for cooking, first on an informally democratic basis and then a few years later (1959) with a formal cooperative constitution largely written by Father Arizmendi. Although Spain has only a weak cooperative tradition, this first co-op not only incorporated the basic Rochdale principle of one-person-one-vote, but added several other features that were important in helping it to become successful. These were: a) limitation of membership to actual workers, b) inclusion of all workers as members, from the least to the most skilled, c) the requirement that new members contribute a substantial membership fee (now about $2,000 payable in easy installments), and d) an arrangement whereby profits are not paid out immediately or wholly to the members, but are divided three ways: seventy percent placed in each worker's account, payable with interest on retirement but meanwhile treated as a loan to the co-op, and the remainder split between reserve funds and contributions by the co-op to "social purposes to benefit the community."

These features not only guaranteed strong public support but a larger pool of working capital than is usually available to producer co-ops. The first venture was an immediate success and led to the formation of additional co-ops in Mondragon and neighboring towns for the manufacture of foundry products, machine tools and food-handling equipment, plus a more conventional consumers co-op store.

To Father Arizmendi, however, the major problem was still the guarantee of adequate working capital, which, as stated, has been one of the major causes of co-op failure, along with the scarcity of competent managers willing to work for modest salaries. The technical college, infused with Christian social teaching, was providing the latter. To provide the former he persuaded the group in 1959 to start the *Caja Laboral Popular*, which became a kind of super credit union providing loans, accounting services, and eventually research and technical assistance to the co-ops.

One of the lay founders of the movement has recorded their resistance to the creation of the *Caja*: "We told him, yesterday we were craftsmen, foremen, and engineers. Today we are trying to learn how to be managers and executives. Tomorrow you want us to become bankers. That is impossible."

The contribution of Father Arizmendi, who persuaded them that it was not only possible but necessary, has been nicely described by Ana Gutierrez Johnson and William Whyte in their 1977 article on Mondragon in Cornell's *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*:

"Was José Maria Arizmendi a charismatic leader? The term suggests one who speaks eloquently, stirs deep emotions, and builds a personal following. According to the founders of Ulgor [the first co-op], Don José Maria was never an eloquent

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speaker; in fact, especially in the early years of the movement, he often had trouble finding the words to express his ideas. It was not always easy to understand what he was getting at, yet the members listened patiently and reflectively for they sensed that he was following a vision of a better world that they could help create. Clearly he did stir emotions, but they did not come to center upon himself. He stirred people to *think* and *act*. An apt description of the essence of his leadership comes from the present director of the *Escuela Politecnica*, Javier Retegui: '[Arizmendi] sees the future — and makes us face it.' "

TODAY IN EUROPE and the Third World intelligent Christians are coming to recognize that neither capitalism nor Communism can provide both freedom and justice, can produce a society that will insure the ordinary citizen a decent job and the chance to fulfill his or her potential as a worker, as a creator, as a parent, as a member of the body politic, as a child of God.

In America that recognition is arriving more slowly. People like Michael Novak and William Buckley at the upper level of the intellectual scale and Jerry Falwell at the lower are still trying to convince us that capitalism and Christianity make compatible bedfellows. If we look no farther than our own country, the fabulously wealthy America, we are staring into the faces of 9,500,000 unemployed human beings, according to the official figures. The AFL-CIO charges that "true" unemployment is closer to 13,500,000. Among black youth, it is up around forty percent and we may be seeing the creation of a permanent underclass whose only hope of income is in the pursuit of crime and violence. If we look beyond our borders, especially to the south, we can see even more depressing examples of the failure of capitalism to meet Christian standards, or even human standards, of social justice.

The AFL-CIO, like most union movements, has been uncomfortable with cooperatives because they seem to undermine the adversary role with which they feel most at home. In England, where the unions are even more class-conscious than here, this is changing as unemployment becomes more and more menacing. Last fall, for example, the Trades Union Congress of Wales announced, after an eight-month study and a visit to Mondragon, that it was seeking public funds to start a similar operation that would create 10,000 jobs for its unemployed members. George Wright, general secretary of the Welsh TUC, said that his organization was tired of being "a field ambulance for capitalism" and wanted to start its own cooperatives that could directly serve its members.

In this country plant closings and runaway shops are relentlessly educating union officials to the realization that they have a responsibility to their members who want to keep those plants operating and themselves working. More and more it is becoming apparent that the best way to do that is by way of a workers' co-op. Mondragon has now proven that the chances of success are excellent if the right formula is followed. True, there are some advantages peculiar to that particular place and time, but the absence of these advantages need not discourage anyone. We are finally developing a body of scholars and practical experts who can help people with technical advice and assistance on structure, funding, and management. Among the best sources are the Industrial Cooperative Association, 249 Elm St., Somerville, MA 02144 (617-628-7330) and the Association for Workplace Democracy, 1747 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20009 (202-265-7727).

The best book on the subject remains that by an Englishman, Robert Oakeshott, despite the emergence of some anti-union bias in the last chapter. It is *The Case for Workers' Co-ops* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Boston, 1978, $21.50), and the heart of it is the chapter on Mondragon.

"[Arizmendi] sees the future — and makes us face it." There are alarming and repellent features to that future that make it necessary to face it. But if we take Father Arizmendi's advice on how to face it, I believe that we can build a future that works, and is beautiful.

Screen

THE LAST TYCOON

MARKETING A FRECKLE-FACED ORPHAN

IN MY LAST COLUMN, I was praising *Annie* for being a big investment that pays off in small ways. Its pleasures are in its details. For instance, at one point Punjab (Geoffrey Holder), who has magical powers that include levitation, is amusing Annie (Aileen Quinn) by making a huge urn of flowers float from its pedestal to a table. Then some crisis arises, and Annie is whisked away to more important events. But the scene doesn't end there. Left to himself now, his audience gone, Punjab picks up the urn and carefully replaces it on its pedestal by hand. That's nice! I like that. I don't know who added this little flourish, but it has to have been one of the people producer Ray Stark brought in to spice up the Broadway musical — screenwriter Carol Sobieski,

SURE-- "DADDY" EARNS BILLIONS-- AN' GIVES AWAY BILLIONS OF HIS OWN MONEY, TO HELP AMERICANS! SO THAT'S BAD?
HAROLD GRAY
POOR "DADDY"! HE SAYS IF HE HAD IT ALL TO DO OVER AGAIN HE DOESN'T THINK HE'D TAKE TH' TROUBLE!
HAROLD GRAY

From The History of Little Orphan Annie *by Bruce Smith (Ballantine, $5.95).*

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director John Huston, maybe Holder himself — because Punjab wasn't in the original show. I suspect that it was Huston. Bits of business like this are just what a seasoned, savvy director would have added, and they're the kind of thing Stark hired Huston to create.

The Broadway show was, in Stark's own words, "terrific for kids who sat on telephone books and old people in wheelchairs," but the movie would have to have a much broader appeal to return its cost. Stark therefore decided to add dashes of vinegar to the milk of human kindness in which the original *Annie* wallowed, to spike its cuteness with zaniness. This was why he hired Huston, who had never done a musical before. What Huston had to offer was the knack for by-play that he's brought to all his movies since his debut as a director, forty years ago, in *The Maltese Falcon*. A series of gestures he devised for Bogart, Greenstreet, and others in that film — a constant laying-on of hands that conveys the truths the dialogue tries to hide — is the sort of detail that convinces me Huston dreamed up the closing of the urn scene here. The urn's replacement is something at which I laughed, and so did my ten-year-old daughter. It's a gag with exactly the range, the mass appeal, that Stark wanted to give *Annie* on the screen.

Stark showed his talent for producing on *Annie* by throwing away money. Really. There are other producers who could have raised the money *Annie* required, and even spent it; but rare is the Hollywood executive who could have faced the fact that what he got for his money was worthless. After they were made, Stark cut out the two biggest production numbers in the film — Reinking's "Let's Go to the Movies" sequence at Radio City, which I was talking about last time, and "Easy Street," whose costs included the building of a permanent, million-dollar set. The reason most producers can't admit that throwing money at a problem hasn't solved it is that money is the *sine qua non* of their careers. If they ever stopped believing in money, they'd jump out the window. Stark shows in *Annie* that he is able to transcend even this most cherished article of the producer's faith. He scales down not only "Easy Street" and the Radio City sequence, but "Tomorrow" and numerous other scenes. He reduces the entire production to a manageable set of details, to gestures, skits, and one-liners that can succeed by imagination alone.

Unexpectedly likable as I found *Annie*, though, I can't just leave it at that. Stark's talents aren't the bottom line in the movies, and I don't want to leave anybody with the impression they are. That's why I'm pursuing the subject of this movie into a second installment. Once at a preview, Stark got all choked up and told the audience, "I can only hope that on my tombstone are the words: '*Annie*, she is the one I was looking for.' " That's very poignant, but one mustn't get carried away. The fact is that Stark wasn't interested in this property until he realized what an enormous "recognition factor" *Annie* has with the American public. What he fell in love with was not the gutsy little orphan with freckles, but a marketing potential that he has now set up fifty companies manufacturing five hundred products to exploit. In a recent interview Stark said, "The fun I get out of the business is packaging and promotion." This may not be the sentiment he wants on the tombstone, but it's closer to the mark.

The trouble with Stark's approach is that even if we don't buy all this crap he's making, we still pay for it. A great deal of the energy spent on *Annie* went into that stuff instead of the movie itself, and ultimately we do get less movie for our admission price as a consequence. *Annie* is good, but no classic. If somebody wants to make *That's Entertainment, Part Four* in the year 2000, he's going to have to find musicals better than this to do it with. Not only will the film stock on which *Annie* was shot disintegrate long before then, but so will its pleasures. My daughter can't wait to see *Annie* again, and I'm sure she'll love it just as much. But I think I'll let my wife take her next time.

You'll notice that one of the movie's stars whom I've mentioned, but had no occasion to praise, is Ann Reinking. There has to be something fundamentally wrong in a musical where the one member of the cast who looks lost, out of place, is the only one who can sing and dance. With her Radio City dances cut, Reinking's only real showcase is "We've Got Annie," a number performed at the Warbucks mansion. Big as the house is, the movie gets very claustrophobic during this number. Reinking's talent suddenly threatens to bust *Annie* wide open at the seams, to blow the whole movie as sky-high as a bomb-throwing Bolshevik in an earlier scene was trying to blow Daddy Warbucks. No one else in the movie could have kept up with Reinking, which is why she seems like the odd woman out.

Carol Burnett, as Miss Hannigan, is the only one who might have matched Reinking — twenty years ago. But Burnett has now spent too much time on TV, sandwiching her talent between commercials. In the reduced version of "Easy Street," danced inside the orphanage, Burnett distinguishes herself primarily by striding into door jambs or putting her foot through a wall at certain key moments. At one point where she has a virtuoso kick to perform — over Tim Curry's head while they're dancing up some stairs — a stand-in danced the step for her. In the film's early numbers, particularly "Hard-Knocks Life," Aileen Quinn and the other orphans display lots of energy. But the dancing is mostly acrobatics (flips and cartwheels), and the choreography, the ability to guide our attention amidst all the movement, is provided by the editing rather than the dancing itself. At the other end of the film, in the finale, Quinn and Finney pad through a minor soft shoe, something adapted to Finney's lack of musical talent. The only fireworks go off not in the singing and dancing, but in the sky overhead, where cascading showers of phosphorus spell out "The End."

Actually, the end came earlier, when actors like Albert Finney and Rex Harrison began appearing in musicals in place of real dancers. It never was the expense of the production numbers that made a musical great. It was Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, all alone, on a dance floor as big as a football field and as shiny as the lid of a Steinway. *That* was what *That's Entertainment* memorialized. And that is what *Annie* ultimately lacks.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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Books: FOLLOWING DeTOCQUEVILLE

AMERICAN JOURNEY
TRAVELING WITH TOCQUEVILLE IN SEARCH OF DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA
Richard Reeves
Simon and Schuster, $14.95, 352 pp.

Martin Green

THIS is a book I recommend to everyone, but especially to those like myself who habitually shirk their civic duty to read the newspaper and watch the current affairs program on TV. Reading Reeves, you will catch up with all that you have missed—or at least with quite as much as you can cope with. He quotes some authority that America is expanding at the rate of ten billion words a minute; and as we know, words aren't the half of it— what about figures, what about images? Nowadays we see our culture as a mushroom cloud, expanding centrifugally, with some of the same apocalyptic effect as that other mushroom cloud. But against this dragon Richard Reeves is our St. George. He reduces those words and their meanings to manageable proportions.

He has investigated America today by following the journey that de Tocqueville made 150 years ago, asking the same or equivalent questions of the equivalent people. He begins in Newport, Rhode Island, on the same day of the year as de Tocqueville began, and ends in Washington, D.C. He talks to Nixon, as de Tocqueville talked to John Quincy Adams; and he dines with Ed Koch, because de Tocqueville dined with the then mayor of New York. And it is indeed striking how often the same questions prove to be still the ones worth asking; indeed, how often the answers are the same— or at least look similar under the author's skillful manipulation.

The book has therefore, besides facts, a strong element of intellectual pattern; *pattern* here meaning an assertion of form independent of, though relevant to, the items reported; and *intellectual* meaning intellectual history, for by testing de Tocqueville's theory of democracy against contemporary fact, Reeves is continuing and reinforcing a tradition—a tradition of sociological thought as well as of American studies. This is not a single pattern: Reeves makes us see the parallels (and reversals) between conditions then and now; between this journey and that one; between ideas and answers then and now; between what his informants said about other people and what they did in their own lives. But the effect of all this patterning is to reinforce the argument, to make it into a book, to make it memorable. And I mean, among other things, that one remembers what is in the book because of the form. Of course, even after a second reading, one will have only a mental map of where to find things in it—and only a quarter of its contents will be signaled on your map. But that is vastly more than most compilators can boast, and constitutes a good argument for the cultivation of form—for aesthetics. Memory and the Muses are intimately related.

As for what Reeves talks about, the topics of his analysis of America today, I will mention just three. He is concerned about legality—and illegality—and legalism. He points to the extraordinary number of lawyers in America: in 1978 there were 465,000, compared with 12,000 in Japan, and there were 115,000 more in law school. And to the proliferation of law suits: between 1970 and 1977 civil cases filed in federal district courts grew by forty-nine percent. He points to the explosion of class action law since the 1960s, and the way in which law is displacing legislation, and politics. Time and again he was told that only second- or third-rate young Americans go into politics, while the very brightest of all go into law. (This is something they told de Tocqueville too.) Indeed, only men who know the law, Reeves concludes, *can* be full citizens of this country. (De Tocqueville called American lawyers, as compared with French, a sacred caste, the priests of democracy.) At the same time, everyone complains of too much regulation and legalism, and nearly everyone engages in certain kinds of illegality with no moral qualms.

Reeves also recurs often to the debauching of American morals, the decay of the work ethic, and the replacement of religion by therapy. He quotes Christopher Lasch's description of therapy as an anti-religion, and more than once refers to the culture of narcissism. Our ethic is now built around duty to oneself "in glaring contrast to the traditional ethic of obligation to others." And he reports that when he asked why American values have so changed, he was often told "Freud." In fact, Reeves comes close to laying the basic blame for America's problems at the door of Freudianism. But he backs away from doing that, at the last moment, no doubt because of the illiberal company in which he is about to put himself. That hesitancy and self-reversal seem to me to throw some light on the last presidential election results. Liberals are deeply dismayed by the decay of social morality, and by the proliferation of administrative detail and legalism, but they feel that action to curb those would be conservative action. They were content to let conservatives try to deal with those issues, because they had no policy of their own—at least none they could engage in without fearing they were betraying themselves.

Finally, Reeves has a lot to say, again gloomy, but this time incipiently radical in tendency rather than conservative, about the conditions of black people in America. He quotes many blacks who predict imminent repression and violence. Referring to life on one street of Detroit's black ghetto, Reeves says, "If democracy moves forward by millions of individual decisions, then Americans, silently, democratically, by unspoken consensus, made the decision that this is the way it would be in our time."

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That is a grave indictment, of democracy as well as of America, and there is much in the book to make it gloomy reading. But Reeves does not let the whole add up to an indictment. He concludes—though with some signs of indecision—by saying that in America democracy "does work . . . but . . ." His last sentence runs, "The glory and frustration of American democracy is that greatness is defined by each American — and that's the way it was meant to be." Well, we've all heard that before, and it's a let-down after so much clear-thinking and honest writing earlier. At this level, Reeves is no match for de Tocqueville. On the other hand, he knows a great deal more about America — partly because he makes use of those ten billion words a minute of ours. And he has worked out a way to combine those resources of modern reporting with de Tocqueville's analysis, and so to revive a classic art of thought and set it to work again on our own experience.

The blood of Argentina

ON HEROES AND TOMBS

Ernesto Sábato

Godine, $17.95, 479 pp.

Ronald Christ

THE PUBLICATION in English of Ernesto Sábato's masterwork, *On Heroes and Tombs*, is a monumental event: monumental for author, translator, publisher, and reader alike. Best of all, the monument so constituted not only imposed but celebrates original power and reflects genuine honor. Little hollow pomp in the circumstances of delayed appearance for this book published in Argentina during 1961.

That was thirteen years after Sábato's novella *El túnel* claimed world-wide praise from writers so diverse as Thomas Mann, Graham Greene, and Albert Camus, and some years before it passed into dubious status here as a required text in advanced Spanish courses, where the directness of its language and existential statement render it, precisely, a text rather than a work of literature. Translated as *The Outsider*, *El túnel* took Sábato almost nowhere with the English-speaking world; and when the big books of the 1960s' boom in Latin American fiction were being translated, Sábato found himself exactly in the position of his English title: an outsider whose principal novel malingered in English through disastrous trial translations and publishing scuffles while it became one of the best-known books in Latin America and was translated into Italian, French, and German. Sábato, meanwhile, gleaned more fame as well as the *Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger* for his third novel, *Abaddon el Exterminador* (published in 1974 but still untranslated into English), putting him into a circle with authors like García Márquez, Grass, and Solzhenitsyn. The twenty-year wait to see *On Heroes and Tombs* into English has been an inexplicable and at times despairing one for Sábato, who nevertheless emerges as a hero in this 1981 version, which he has altered and annotated significantly.

In other words, we are not getting merely the novel but an edition, including changes and deletions, Sábato tells us, that will be used in any further edition of the book. Furthermore, we are getting the novel in a translation that itself constitutes an edition, so redeeming and perceptive has been the work of Helen R. Lane, who modulates the inherently high-key rhetoric of the Spanish into rhythms and tonalities attuned to English. Add to this memorializing literary work the publisher's handsome and solid binding, beautifully legible type, and considerate use of acid-free paper — as well as the bravery of a small house in welcoming such a grand but often rejected guest — and you have the deliverance of a novel that is truly commemorative and auspicious. (And all too rare in these days of twenty-dollar fiction.)

For the reader, *On Heroes and Tombs* offers, then, an occasion of literary history and a privileged look at a major literary monument that predicts in changed vocabulary the present condition of Argentina's tortured state. Reducible to a simple though enigmatic combination of events and characters, *On Heroes and Tombs* also bulges to dimensions both philosophic and metaphysical — and complicatedly esthetic. The experience of reading it is at once wild, hypnotizing, and disturbing.

The novel's armature is a love affair between a mysteriously idiosyncratic girl, Alejandra, and her hopefully disillusioned lover, Martín, chiefly as seen through the mediating intelligence of Bruno (who once thought he loved the girl only to discover that he really loved her mother), and refracted through the gothic paranoia of a "Report on the Blind" by Alejandra's father, a narrative incubus on the novel who combines an Argentinian Undergroundman with the Grand Inquisitor in the context of a sewerish Inferno. On this armature, Sábato constructs a story as vastly lurid as *Duel in the Sun*; an existentialist essay scattered between the events; an assaultive critique of pure reason: and allegories as available to interpretations as there are subtleties and coarseness in the structure of the book and behavior of its characters. So various and complex, the book brilliantly entices misreadings of itself — one of which misperceives an attack on Borges, who figures as a character — and these misreadings compose an atmosphere for the reader equivalent to that of the people in the novel, which aims at nothing less than being the history of a nation preserved in the strata of fierce obsessions.

The first is Sábato's, freely confessed in the novel's foreword where he explains that he writes "to free himself of an obsession that is not clear even to himself." The second is Martín's (read, maybe, San Martín, Argentine hero of Chile's and Peru's liberation) for Alejandra (try substituting, sometimes, Argentina), convoluted in the third, Bruno's, which reflects the Argentine infatuation and disillusionment with what appears to be the country (Alejandra) but develops into the self-discovery of an obsessive love for the country's past (Alejandra's mother, Georgina), which like all histories embalms the traitor

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Hillel Schwartz

Aubrey Lord Bail Bonds

On cinder blocks
to one side of the vacant lot
BAIL BONDS stenciled on its slanting roof
and huge again across the front, black and yellow,
as if held together by its paint
the office
conspicuous as wasps.

"One who becomes surety
for the debts of another."

Aubrey went to farms
for the young and clumsy
where we teach gratefulness.
He escaped with acumen
and a burning desire to suffer
for others, to take upon himself
our crimes. So much
his accurate handshake tells us.

At week's end he sings
Psalm 137, O daughter of Babylon,
counting the canceled checks,
admiring the wide embrace of the Law.

On the Sabbath,
remembering the Edomites,
he is our fence.

Michael Cadnum

The Cape

He held forth a skin made of eyelids.
"A cape

cured so supple when the
wind blows
it makes only a soft
utterance, a closing, an
opening of the gentlest kind."

"Beautiful!" she said at last.

Outside
flies tasted eyes
that would not close.

D.S. Preston

Capital Punishment Is a Fine, Fine Thing

I sit gray in this barred suspension
within this four walled silence
whose heart I am
that does not beat.

Dear Heart, when you read this
think of me and die
as I die for you
sometime each day
between first call and lights out.

And after lights out I sometimes pretend
that I am dead, tucked away box snug
six feet down somewhere
and free as I lift like Scipio
above the earth smiling in disdain
at such a pitiful sight until "Roll Out!"
punctures the dark silence and I return
to realize
death is meted out in inches.

Richard E. McMullen

The Damned Voices

He was driving home from work
the day the damned voices spoke.
It was an afternoon without sun,
ominous with rain, but he was feeling
good about himself for once.
We are the damned, they said. We are still
here. No fire, no ice, no pain:
darkness—darkness! slow, outward
falling. Help us. Pray for us. He wondered
if he should, if it would be
crazy to pray. He decided it would.

Michael Cadnum

The Reckoning

While downstairs someone continuously talks
on a telephone or to someone who can
never answer, the uninvited guest
sits in the bedroom chair. He will commit
a terrible crime, and thinks of it,

leaning slightly forward into the room,
seeing nothing in it.
How unsimple everything is,
the room with its collection of antique toys,
the window with its
transparent veins of rain, the tangled
branches of the elms grotesque
in the bad visibility of glass.

Who are these people? Why are we here?
The voice from below chatters
unceasingly stilling the
intruder in his wait so that
it is clear who will die,
and it is only a matter of time before she
walks talking ahead of herself
up the stairs into the quiet,
empty hands of the room.

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alongside the hero. So much passion — personal, patriotic, and even psychotic — makes for operatic gesture and language, even when synthesized through the existential cliché of alienation. But, finally, after the first readings when you are overwhelmed by the gust of the book, Sábato's achievement is clear; it is not stylistic (that's why the translation is such a *tour de force*) but architectonic.

Sábato is the great articulator of the nightmare in prose. He dreams a world where we know that the people we see both are and are not who they are because they are much more, just as their words and gestures are. To coordinate this flaring hallucination, as massively compacted as Freud's theoretically compressed dreams, Sábato orders a random Jungian repetitiveness where not only does the individual repeat the pattern of the race but the individuals repeat the patterns of each other. By verbal montage *à la Eisenstein* — sometimes within phrases, sometimes within sentences, paragraphs, or whole sections — Sábato coordinates time, personality, and action as precisely calculated in a deterministic way as that in any of the daringly innovative films of Nicholas Roeg, but without ever permitting the correlation to dim the histrionics or illumine the meaning falsely. He has invented an organized system where order is the hardest thing to come by — again as in the films of Roeg. Thus, at the end, when Martín abandons Buenos Aires to head for the crystalline coldness of Patagonia, Sábato even more closely intercuts scenes from the northward flight of defeated heroes in Argentina's 19th-century civil wars. Martín re-enacts, as he has throughout the book, the frustrated honor and doomed quest of all the book's heroes, who have had to choose their actions in a world that includes the underworld of traitors, sewers, and corruption. You may read that final scene, with Martín heading south, as the hope of the future for Argentina; but, given the determining and insistent alignment of past with present history in the book, that would be to ignore Sábato's informed pessimism as well as Argentina's continuing history. All Sábato's characters inhabit a novel and a nation of which they (and we) can say: ". . . this cruel land, soaked with the blood of so many Argentines . . . a country that as yet we had no clear idea of, a country that even today we still have no really clear idea of — what it is exactly, how far it extends, who it really belongs to . . . this age-old valley, this American loneliness, this nameless despair that torments us amid this chaos, in this fight between brothers."

Many more readings will have to conflict before we can assess the final value of this grand novel for us, readings that will have to account for its belated quality, its excess. Until then, *On Heroes and Tombs* rises as a great testimonial to its author and its nation's literature, which has produced such a drilling counterpoint in the complementary fiction of Jorge Luis Borges and Ernestó Sábato.

The rabbi rejoiced

THE RABBI ON 47th STREET
Ann Birstein
Dial Press, $13.95

Barbara Grizzuti Harrison

UNTIL my mid-teens, I lived in a three-family house in Brooklyn next door to which was a six-story apartment building; next door to the apartment house was a synagogue, every physical detail of which I remember exactly. I have absolutely no visual memory of its congregants. I had, at that time, Jewish friends, and Jewish schoolmates, and Jewish teachers whom I loved; but the part of their lives that had to do with worship was mysterious — alien — to me, so mysterious that I can't for the life of me summon up one image of my friends and neighbors going to *shul*. This mystery (or ignorance) must in part have been willed; My immigrant Italian family was casually anti-Semitic; I thought I'd thrown off the shackles of bigotry — but now I think now, for, after all, why else would I not have allowed myself to see? Jews going about their secular lives were one thing; Jews at worship were so remarkably *other* as to veil vision.

I am irrationally angry that I didn't have Ann Birstein's latest book when I lived (all unknowing) among Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn; I'm delighted to have her lovely book now. In her first nonfiction book, Birstein writes of an unconventional Orthodox rabbi, her father, Bernard Birstein, whom she loved. *The Rabbi on 47th Street* is beautifully written, it's funny, it's a joy to read — and it taught me things I am glad to know and will be happy to remember. Like all great storytellers, Birstein instructs painlessly (and her work reads, deceptively, I'm sure, as if it were written effortlessly). Her memoir has a folkloric quality; it has the power of myth. Like all myths, it has universal appeal. This is a wonderful paradox: its uniqueness and specificity are exactly what make it accessible; the more Birstein's family history differs from mine, the more I recognize myself and my family in her and hers.

Rabbi Birnstein was an immigrant from Russian Europe. Working, as she says, "with memories, memories of things that happened during my lifetime, and memories of stories I used to hear," Ann Birstein takes us back to her father's youth in the Slobodka Yeshiva — a "famous and forbidding center of learning . . . mired in the famous mud, the Slobodka *bloteh*" — to which, "half-starved," he came at the age of nine.

Usually I mistrust this kind of I-was-there hindsight reporting. If I were to open a nonfiction book that began "In 1893 he raised his yellow coffee mug to his lips with a trembling hand and a furrowed brow," my inclination would be to close it rapidly — because after all the writer *wasn't* there. But here is where Birstein's novelist's skills (and her memories of her father's memories) serve her beautifully: When, for example, she describes how her father, on one of his "eating days" engaged in a battle of wits with a charitable Jew from the town who took him in for a meal, I absolutely believe what his daughter calls his "triumph of mind over matter" — I can *see* the young Yeshiva student dividing the kasha in the communal bowl to illustrate the dividing of the Red Sea . . . and,

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not so incidentally, to capture the rivulets of chicken shmaltz in the bowl for himself.

Similarly, I see the young rabbi's sojourn to America; I get the exact flavor of his marriage to a woman who did not share his enthusiasm for the Everglades ("Exotic foliage was not in her line. Neither, for he had tried it, was the Song of Songs."). I feel the despair of the romantic, fastidious young rabbi when he learns he is to become a shochet — a ritual slaughterer — in the golden land, the goldene medina. Most of all, I understand his profound dedication to duty, the searching after righteousness that informed all his actions through all his journeys and vicissitudes — the death of his first wife, the death of a child, years spent in ramshackle houses in Georgia and dreary railroad flats in Chicago. Ann Birstein has achieved her own triumph of mind over matter.

Rabbi Birstein's was a life of love, laughter, duty, service, pain, and praise, a life that celebrated life, one that was rooted in family and worship. And a life that George Jessel eulogized. Rabbi Birstein, an indefatigable scholar who loved the written word, became, after many travails, rabbi of The Actors Temple, a modest building that still stands on 47th Street, in close proximity to Broadway. During his lifetime, Ed Sullivan called him "the one Broadway personality that never changes his act. The little rabbi's role is that of the humanitarian and he plays it to the hilt, bringing comfort and solace to Christian and Jew alike." When he died in 1959, *Variety* called him "hep." He loved actors — at a time when conservative members of the minyan were urging him to "throw the actyoren out." Even circus midgets, after all, needed a rabbi to marry them.

His daughter describes him: "He was not only an orator, but a cuff-shooter, well dressed and dapper. His eyeglasses had black rims to them. He had . . . a gray chesterfield with a black velvet collar, plus a black felt hat, and a cane with an amber top." He smoked Turkish cigarettes. He was very short.

Rabbi Birstein had three children by his first wife, two by his second. And in-laws. Toward all of whom he felt responsibility. Dozens of family members troop through this book, some of them jolly, some of them dour (all of them drawn with particularity and brilliance). Their sheer number would have daunted a lesser man. "I'll tell you a story," Rabbi Birstein says. "A young man once said to an old man, What is life's heaviest burden? And the old man said, To have nothing to carry." I have not known a family so well since Salinger parted company with the Glass family.

These family portraits are the heart of this book. Ann Birstein manages, with wit and delicacy, to describe her parents' wedding night (to describe *anybody's* wedding night is a major accomplishment). And to describe her mother, Clara — a chronic worrier married to a man with an incredible zest for life, a woman always on the verge of hysteria married to a man who was solid as a rock, a woman to whom the idea of motherhood appealed more than the actual mothering

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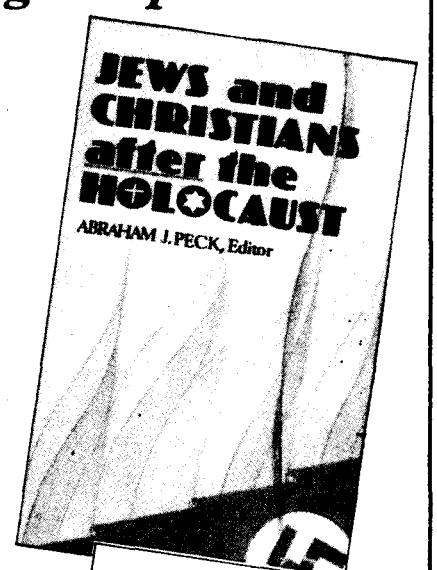

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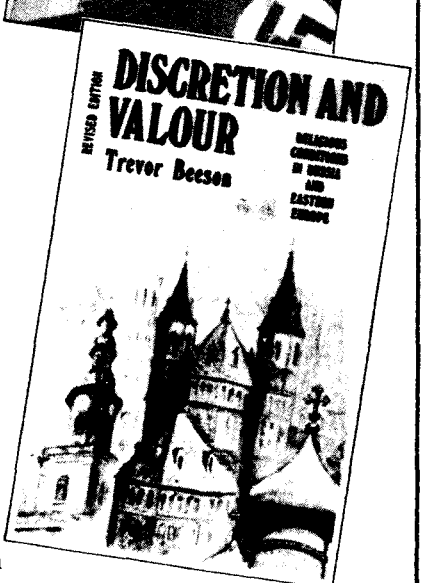

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ever did, a woman who could be depressed by the words "a good time." And yet a woman to whom her daughter gives her due: When her husband died, Clara said, "My king is dead. My friend." It cracks the heart.

For Rabbi Birstein, family and community are all: "Our entire Jewish religion is based on a sense of community," he says; "all our prayers are in the plural form." "But where is God in all this, I want to know? Where is God?" asks one of the rabbi's congregants when Birstein lets girls into the Talmud Torah "to fill up the enrollment." "So what's the harm?" the rabbi answers; "I'll tell you a story. Once in Kovno, there was a poor ordinary carpenter who wore his tefillin constantly and davened around the clock. Such a *tsadik*, everybody said. But . . . if that man really believed in God, . . . he would daven [pray] a little less and help other Jews more."

"The Jews are a nation of dreamers, Channele," Rabbi Birstein told his youngest daughter, who grew up to be a dreamer, a novelist; Rabbi Birstein's life was hard, but his dreams, and his joy, were immense: "In our prayers we say thanks for everything: the new moon, the sun, the stars, a piece of bread, a cup of wine. For with this wonderful world, *His* wonderful world, God gave us the capacity to enjoy it."

He does enjoy. On a terrible hot night in Georgia, in a terrible house, lying next to a wife who is not eager to make love, he smells the honeysuckle, and rejoices. This gift for joy belongs also to his daughter, who could not otherwise have written this book.

When one of his hard-working daughters criticizes Clara, Rabbi Birstein says of his wife: " 'She believes in food, like Maimonides. He says the Misnna begins with dietary laws because food is the first essential of living.' My father sighed. 'Of course, he goes on to other essentials.' " Rabbi Birstein had, if one may say so, his crosses to bear. I see him smiling, and shrugging. And because I think Maimonides (together with Clara, who always had a hot lunch ready for her daughters) was on to something, I must say that one of the joys of this book is its wonderful litanies of food: chopped liver, chicken soup with knaidlach, roast chicken, noodle pudding, sliced cucumbers, honey cake, tea with raspberry jam at the bottom of the glasses, herring, wine, schnapps, compote, goose, potato kugel, blintzes, sour cream, demitasses, matzo ball soup, ices. . . . It brought me back to my childhood, when never ever did I enter a Jewish house without being offered food. It made me feel at home.

A new holistic science?

THE REENCHANTMENT OF THE WORLD

Morris Berman

Cornell Univ. Press, $34.50, $8.95 paper, 356 pp.

THE TURNING POINT

SCIENCE, SOCIETY AND THE RISING CULTURE

Fritjof Capra

Simon and Schuster, $16.95, 464 pp.

David Kolb

MARILYN FERGUSON in *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, suggested that a healing way of seeing and being is already in existence in our culture and is moving toward dominance. These books by Berman and Capra urge this new way of looking at the world and discuss its consequences for our lives and institutions. If there is a conspiracy these books give its rationale.

Both writers claim our cultural crises stem from a faulty picture of the world. Since the seventeenth century we have boxed ourselves into a overly analytical, atomistic, mechanical science and technology that deny the richer existence that makes science possible. But science is not the real villain; we must blame our assumption that we are isolated selves facing an indifferent world which we set out to know and control through mechanistic means. We are urged to change to an holistic view of "one indivisible, dynamic whole whose parts are essentially interrelated and can be understood only as patterns of a cosmic process."

For Berman the way to health lies in the recognition that our psychic and bodily connection with reality has not been destroyed by the modern world view, only *repressed*. Drawing on the work of Polanyi and Reich he argues that the subject/object split rests on a deeper level of being, on that "participatory" consciousness Descartes drove underground. At this level the modern separation of subject/object breaks down; knowledge — as in poetic insight — is becoming what we know. Moreover, awareness of this level of identification reveals to us our existential roots.

The writings of Gregory Bateson provide Berman with a prototype system which softens all modern dualities without at the same time dissolving all difference into an uncritical primitive animism. Berman gives a clear and sensitive exposition of Bateson's ideas in social anthropology, psychology, and cybernetic theory. "Bateson offers us a place to step, a non-Cartesian [non subject/object] mode of *scientific* reasoning." That mode of reasoning sees all entities as part of "minds" which are not separate spiritual substances but holistic systems greater than the sum of their parts, which keep their balance through feedback and mutual inner reactions. For anything to be at all means for it to be a member within self-regulating systems on many different levels.

The point has ethical implications: solidarity with the environment and the importance of balance over maximizing single variables like profit or comfort or growth. Once the world is seen in this way a new holistic science can begin to grow. Berman is vague about what such a science will look like. Capra, drawing on his work in quantum physics, describes the new style of science as based on observation and the construction of models (but not necessarily quantitative models), where all models have limited application and no one model is more fundamental than any other.

Berman chronicles the rise of the mechanistic view and discusses the prior "participatory" consciousness out of

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which it emerged. In olden days people sensed that everything in the universe was alive and interrelated. Descartes and Newton broke that world into us "in here" and the objects "out there." Once this subject/object dichotomy was established all our crises began to grow. Berman's account of the modern split view of the world is well informed and sensitive to the many factors involved, for example, how the subject/object view fitted the needs of the rising social classes. He even claims that "the triumph of the Cartesian paradigm . . . was not a scientific but a political process; participating consciousness was rejected, not refuted." Capra offers a briefer historical survey of the impact of Newtonian science on many areas of knowledge. In an earlier book, *The Tao of Physics*, Capra argued at length that post-Einsteinian physics had escaped the subject/object prison; now he urges other fields to follow that lead. Capra's historical narration suggests that worldviews come before everything else. For him capitalism is a *result* of the subject/object way of thinking rather than, as Berman would have it, one of the causal elements in a gestalt that includes the scientific worldview.

Capra's analysis of our contemporary situation centers on three areas: biology and health care, psychology, and economics. He argues that theories and practices based on subjects manipulating neutral objects have reduced our individual and social health. He sketches the new world view emerging from quantum physics and applies it in turn to the three areas, where he finds the beginnings of holistic ideas and institutions concerned with bodily, psychic, and economic health. His message is that the new world is upon us unnoticed, awaiting only the coming together of presently scattered movements and ideas. The turning point has come.

Both writers share the vision of a decentralized, human-scale, pluralized utopia, whose limited social institutions, like Capra's limited scientific theories, are not under any overall master but are loyal to their own natural regions. Capra radiates political optimism. The dominant culture is disintegrating and the new is rising. With coalescence will come power. Berman is less naive in his discussion of the totalitarian potential of holistic modes of thought and organization. He worries about the patterns of behavior, notably "guruism," in the same groups Capra heralds as beginning the new culture.

Both writers find inspiration in nonmainstream traditions. Capra (practicing the imperialism he criticizes) annexes all mystics and "the" tradition of the East into the particular Taoist-Buddhist blend he favors. Berman, more sensitive to differences, examines alchemy and other rejected Western approaches to the world. But Berman and Capra are swimming in the mainstream. They believe in progress. We are in a Big Evil from which may come a Big Change.

Neither author seems interested in the more radical attacks on the whole Greek-and-Western project currently brewing in deconstructionist and pragmatic circles and appearing in the work of Derrida or Foucault or Rorty. In roundabout ways Capra and Berman have much in common with these movements, especially the proposal for a multitude of kinds of self-limited discourses, but Capra and Berman are old-fashioned realists in comparison to the dances of the other views, which would countenance no overall language, even (or especially!) a holistic metaphysics. Berman is aware of the dangers posed by the ironic self and the dance of the signifier; he will have none of it.

Surely we need the kind of effort these books are making to find less limiting ways of viewing ourselves and the world, and a broader notion of rationality that will enable us to keep the benefits of modernity while shedding some of its burdens. At the moment, however, the directions that Berman and Capra are pursuing remain only directions. Both writers point to new paradigms for science and institutions. Yet, in the full sense which Thomas Kuhn gave to the word "paradigm," it is not enough to have an example of a possible new way of doing things. The examples must have been accepted by the relevant group as

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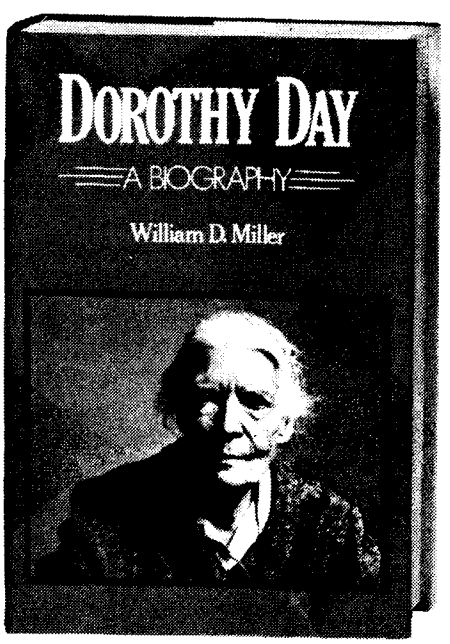

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defining *the* way to do things. What Berman and Capra describe still remains marginal. Physicists in general do not accept Capra's claim for their status as revolutionaries, based as it is on daring interpretations of quantum mechanics, a field whose success leaves physicists more puzzled then exultant. Bateson's work has not yet become the progenitor of a new holistic science. Nor have the diverse liberation and renovation movements yet found a common metaphysical center.

Will this view remain only marginal? Berman is arguing that the crisis of the old will force adoption of the new world view. Capra contends that the new world is already coalescing. There is danger of political naïveté here. It is too easy to assume that any view or movement which is *against* capitalism or oppression or subject/object thinking is automatically *for* some goal in common with other such movements. "The enemy of my enemy is my friend" is a bad intellectual rule and a shaky political guide. There are many ways of being against, and definition by negation is not enough, as we know from the struggles that follow intellectual and political revolutions. But to define the new view and the rising culture as these books do is perhaps more than description; it's a political act. It remains to be seen whether the new view and culture will come together and whether they will resist being captured and turned into yet one more "lifestyle" option for the consumer society.

Down payment on an overdue debt

CHICAGO'S CATHOLICS
THE EVOLUTION OF AN AMERICAN IDENTITY

Charles Shanabruch
Notre Dame, $18.95, 296 pp.

George G. Higgins

LAST YEAR Harvard University Press, as though officially to authenticate the contemporary ethnic revival, published a monumental thousand-page *Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. An indispensable reference work, it will undoubtedly have the field all to itself for the indefinite future. It describes in detail the origins, history, and present situation of every ethnic group from "Acadians to Zoroastrians," and contains in addition a series of scholarly thematic essays that illustrate the key facets of ethnicity.

One of the best of these essays, "American Identity and Americanization," deals at the theoretical level with the same problem that Charles Shanabruch has researched historically in his case study of how the enthnically variegated CAtholics of one archdiocese in the United States, during the period 1833-1924, became Americanized — more reluctantly and more painfully in some cases than in others — while holding onto their religious faith and the best of their ethnic values and traditions. The author of the Harvard essay on Americanization, Philip Gleason, Professor of History at Notre Dame University, recalls for the record that Orestes Brownson, one of the most celebrated converts to Catholicism in the history of the United States, was greatly exercised about this problem in the middle of the nineteenth century and argued almost passionately, in Gleason's words, that since "it would clearly be suicidal for the Catholic religion to allow itself to be identified with any foreign nationality . . ., it was imperative to distinguish between nationality and Catholicity, so that immigrants would not abandon their faith in the process of Americanizing, and Americans would understand that to become a Catholic one did not have to give up his nationality."

At the end of the nineteenth century, Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Ireland, Archbishop Keane, and the other so-called "Americanizers" in the Catholic community were still making the same point with equal insistence but perhaps with greater sensitivity to the real or alleged grievances and to the legitimate hopes and aspirations of the ethnic immigrants — including the Irish who, to put it very mildly, never managed to endear themselves to the contentious and somewhat overbearing Dr. Brownson. Brownson and the Americanizers were sympathetic to the view of Brownson's friend and fellow-convert, Isaac Hecker, founder of the Paulist Fathers, "that Americans," again in Gleason's words, "were a deeply religious people who would respond eagerly to Catholicism if it were presented to them in a congenial manner."

The present reviewer, by temperament, training, and family tradition has always instinctively, perhaps even uncritically, sided with this point of view, but Shanabruch's book (along with other recent studies in the field of American church history) has persuaded him that with all due respect to the Americanizers, the time has come to recognize the contribution of a number of less famous and less articulate churchmen who, as Shanabruch reminds us, had to deal pragmatically, year in and year out, with almost insurmountable pastoral problems and consequently did not enjoy the luxury of debating in theoretical terms the "ideological aspects of Americanization." We owe these unheralded leaders a deep debt of gratitude. As a native of Chicago, I, for one, feel beholden to Shanabruch for having made a first down payment on this long ovedue debt to one particular group of these pragmatic leaders namely, the archbishops and bishops who presided over the Archdiocese of Chicago at a time when ethnic immigrants made up the majority of the Catholic population.

Shanabruch's study of how Chicago's Catholics, under the flexible leadership of these long-forgotten churchmen, responded pragmatically to the problem which Brownson discussed theoretically may come as something of a surprise to contemporary Chicago Catholics if only because most of us, unfortunately, know less about the history of our own archdiocese than we know about the history of the church *in partibus* — or, in any event, less than we know about the history of the church in Baltimore and other Sees which have been studies in greater detail by professional scholars than ours has been thus far.

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It would be chauvinistic, however, to evaluate Shanabruch's study exclusively in home-town Chicago terms. In other words, I suspect that a similar study of any one of several other multi-ethnic dioceses would tell pretty much the same story—the story of how the Catholic church "survived the storm of immigrant nationalism" and helped its impoverished ethnic constituents to achieve a satisfactory degree of ecclesial and civic unity while preserving in varying degrees their own ethnic heritage.

The fact that their host society was more unsympathetic to both their religious faith and their ethnic culture than Brownson, Hecker, et al, seemed to realize makes their story all the more remarkable. "At the time of the church's origin in Chicago," Shanabruch concludes, "it might have been unreasonable to expect that one institution could withstand the centripetal force generated by more than twenty distinct nationalities. Yet its bishops and archbishops, without benefit of successful models, brought unity out of potential chaos. The Polish National Catholic Church, established in 1895, was the only schismatic break and it made but limited progress. Unlike Lutheranism and the denominational crises that affected it, the Catholic church rested on the intense faith and socio-psychological needs of the immigrants, the wise and flexible leadership of the bishops, and the persecution of the host society."

"Persecution" may be too strong a word in this context, but at the very least it must be said that Brownson and Hecker and even some of the more perceptive Americanizers of a later generation probably exaggerated the readiness of the then dominant non-Catholic elite to respond benignly either to Catholicism as such or to its ethnic immigrant constituents.

It is safe to assume, in conclusion, that some of Shanabruch's more critical readers will fault him for allegedly being too laudatory and too uncritical of Chicago's Catholics and their ecclesiastical leaders. For my own part, however, I am pleased that he chose to end his story on such an upbeat note. By hindsight, it is all to easy for today's more upwardly mobile, more affluent, and more highly educated Catholics to second-guess their immigrant forebears, but Shanabruch's book suggests, to me at least, that judging the performance of a largely immigrant church in the nineteenth and early twentieth century by today's quite different and more sophisticated standards serves no discernible purpose except to distract us from or, worse still, to help us rationalize our own mistakes and limitations in meeting the pastoral and socio-economic problems which we are faced with at the present time. Not the least of these problems are those generated by the arrival here in recent years of a whole new generation of immigrants. They already number in the millions, and millions more can be expected to arrive, legally or otherwise, in the years that lie immediately ahead. History will not judge us too harshly if our collective response to their special needs at least comes close to matching, both in wisdom and compassion, the imperfect but, on balance, constructive response of our forebears to the needs of the original group of ethnic immigrants whom they were called upon to serve during the period covered by Shanabruch in his timely study.

REVIEWERS

MARTIN GREEN *teaches in the English department at Tufts University. His books include* The Challenge of the Mahatmas *and* Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire *(Basic Books).*

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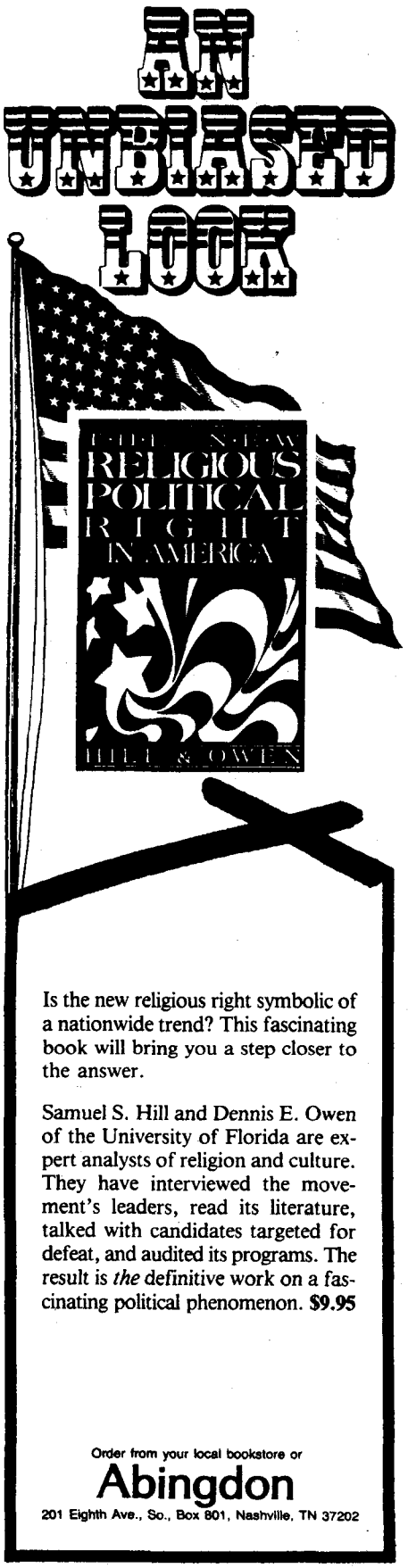

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Correspondence

(Continued from page 354)

a state almost beyond repair (*vide* Nicaragua) is the clear and urgent priority for El Salvador.

EDWARD S. HERMAN

The editors reply:

Edward S. Herman has been a tireless critic of abuses of American military and economic power.For that very reason, we find the implications of his letter very disturbing.

Mr. Herman makes three general points:

1. Social movements that exist under conditions of terror are apt to reflect those conditions in their own internal dogmatism and violence.

2. Such extremist behavior may be emphasized or even promoted by opposing propaganda systems in order to discredit insurgents.

3. Americans should guard against rationalizing U.S. support for murderous regimes overseas on the grounds of preserving a democratically inclined center against the extremes of left and right when (a) such a center may not exist or be a viable political force and (b) U.S. intervention itself decimates such a center.

One may readily agree with these points in general, but not feel that they lead to the same conclusions about El Salvador that Mr. Herman apparently does: namely, that one should minimize all criticism of the insurgent forces lest it detract from an unqualified effort to end the U.S.'s involvement. It is true that readers of Gabriel Zaid's analysis in *Dissent* might want to temper that evaluation of the Salvadoran rebels by recalling the internecine quarrels and assassinations that marred resistance movements in Nazi-occupied Europe. Nonetheless, understanding the genesis of the guerrillas' more sinister beliefs and deeds does not resolve the problem of how to weigh those realities now that they actually exist. Nor does it expunge the fact that much of the guerrilla leadership appears deeply committed to an outlook that Polish workers, for instance, know from long experience to be a source of human debasement.

Far more disturbing yet is Mr. Herman's implication that because "Western" or U.S. propagandists may manipulate criticism of left-wing insurgents, such criticism is to be discounted. This strikes us as the mirror image of right-wing attempts to discredit dissent from American policies because "that's just what *Pravda* says." Last year *Commonweal* was told by an administration supporter that an article "denigrating" the Salvadoran junta was Soviet "disinformation." Now Mr. Herman implies that Zaid's article "denigrating" the rebels is U.S. "disinformation." We think this line of argument is a red herring.

Mr. Herman sees the situation in El Salvador in simpler terms than we do. We believe, for example, that there *is* a democratically inclined "middle ground" in El Salvador—as the church there has repeatedly testified.That hasn't led us to support military aid to the junta; but should the U.S. try to block arms shipments to the rebels? should the U.S. give the government *economic* assistance? The Catholic bishops there and here have said yes. Mr. Herman makes the comparison to Cuba simpler than we would. Cuba, to cite one complexity, had the lowest death rate and lowest infant mortality rate in Latin America *before* Castro's revolution. It was in no way comparable to El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Indonesia.

What Mr. Herman has against *Dissent* and "social democrats" is that they, too, don't see the world in terms as simple as his. He argues, in effect, that simplification serves political effectiveness. And he's right—in the short run. In the long run, we believe that political effectiveness is served by trying to tell the truth in its full, confusing, complexity. In any case, that is the vocation of a journal like ours.

THE EDITORS

Easter straw men

Newton, Mass.

To the Editors: John Garvey's "The Reality of Easter" [Apr. 9] is disappointing. There is no point in setting up straw men; neither Schillebeeckx nor Sebastian Moore come close to expressing the feeble versions of resurrection that Garvey rightly rejects; they are hardly saying "Jesus lives only as any impressive dead person lives." When he says that Scripture and other sources make it clear that "Jesus is alive with a new kind of life," he is right but doesn't go on to ask the key question, how? In what manner was this perceived? How did this perception become so real for the disciples that "the truth possessed them," in St. Thomas's phrase?

This is probing the faith experience, an approach that Garvey chooses to call watery and insipid. Moore reminds us that if we don't move in this direction, if we don't reflect on whatever turned them around, transformed them (and reaches across a hundred generations to us), we do not move into the heart of the mystery (as much as anyone can). We are left with no more than a report that someone presumed dead, like a prisoner of war, is now happily reported alive.

Garvey says, "The real question is, did a man rise from the dead, not the state of mind of the early church." And he notes that we are uncomfortable with the marvelous in our rationalist age. The latter is true, but more reflection is needed. Suppose I believe that Lazarus was really raised from the dead, that the account in John is not a baptismal catechesis, as some scholars think, but a miraculous return of someone dead to life. Does Lazarus then become the Lord? The Alpha and Omega? The reason I live with hope? Of course not. Now consider the report that Jesus was raised from the dead. Why is it that, for twenty centuries and in untold and wondrous fashion, *he* has been considered the Lord, and why do I look to him this Easter with the conviction that my destiny is in his hands? *This* return to life—Jesus, not Lazarus—has had greater impact. Precisely. It is not that Lazarus might have tottered out with winding sheets still trailing, while Jesus presumably came forth in full vigor of his manhood. What happened with Jesus and the disciples after the cross was evidently transformative, uniquely powerful. This is the work of the Spirit, and part of our problem is that

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we don't understand the Creator Spirit nor the sense in which God pervades the universe. The disciples' reaction to all this, or participation in it, has been called a faith experience, and Moore suggests that these words do not preclude an objective reality; his remarks here are very helpful. We should not mock or dismiss efforts to probe this faith experience, as Moore also suggests, with the help of mystics and our own flickers of light.

Garvey begs the question when he writes, "Jesus appears sometimes as a stranger recognized 'in the breaking of the bread,' or in serving breakfast to his friends," etc. Again, how? It doesn't help to say, as he does, that this is the mysterious one in whom we should put our trust. We all have to think a lot—believers and theologians both—as to what it means to gather in his name, to break bread at the Eucharist or any meal, what it means to become aware of the mystery of another person, and myself, our coming and going and brief communion; what it means for the loving situation to reveal God, as Scripture says; what it means for life to confront and delight us with "the mystery deep down in things" in which we participate in so many ways (the Eucharist is pre-eminently one of them). I invite others to improve on this language, to discover the hidden One in whom we live and move and have our being. Theologians who try it should not be denigrated, and we must look to the poets and story-tellers as well.

The oddest line in Garvey's article is the reference to death as that place where experiences end for good. If true the whole question seems moot for him. It is precisely at death that some thinkers suggest what happens to us is that we move from the periphery to the center, like people who have only circled existence up to now. Death in that view, and through the continued gift of the Living One, is the moment when human existence moves from the part to the whole.

One more comment: Garvey quotes a passage from Flannery O'Connor in which she disavows believing in the Eucharist "if it is only a symbol." He may fear that someone will consider the resurrection "only a symbol." Flannery O'Connor's remark is dated; it indicates that the scholarly recovery of how symbols work hasn't yet got around (the same is true of myth). We have regained an earlier understanding that symbols are not some shadow world; they partake of reality, and no one who understands this would now use the phrase, "only a symbol." They are the way we work, and move us into a universe of meaning. To put it briefly: a symbol discloses, or invites one to participate in, a reality which continues to be disclosed, which has many layers or riches to communicate, only one or a few of which come through at a given time. My handshake or embrace of you is real, but it cannot fully express my love for you. That situation is both my delight (that I can communicate in part) and my anguish, that I am finite and always yearning for more. The resurrection as symbol cannot fully convey "the things the Father has in store for those who love him." But it can move us in the very depth of our being, and give us the truth which lays hold of us — like music more beautiful than any we have heard before.

(REV.) JOSEPH T. NOLAN

Church/world watch

(Continued from page 360)

nuclear policy; they have shaped the policy, implemented it and defended it in negotiations with European allies and Soviet adversaries. In the *Foreign Affairs* article they call for consideration of a "No-first-use pledge" by the United States. This proposal, as they note, is a challenge to NATO strategic doctrine of the last 33 years. This kind of proposal by these personalities opens a new stage in the policy debate; the challenge here is to fundamental principles not tactics. The consensual character of the policy debate is stretched to its limit by this proposal.

Presently the popular and the policy dimensions of the nuclear debate move on parallel tracks. The popular proposals are so broad and general that most in the policy community keep their distance. The *Foreign Affairs* article proposes an increase in NATO conventional forces that many in the popular movement would not find appealing. This parallel relationship keeps the peace between the popular and policy communities, but it is not a long-term strategy. There is a need to probe the possibility of intersection, of the capacity for complementary action. Catholic moral teaching on warfare has always had a dual objective: to set the right terms for policy debate and to form the conscience of the public. Because we relate in this way to both dimensions of the nuclear debate, we should ask more insistently than we have thus far how the popular and policy proposals can be related to their common goal of reversing the arms race.

J. BRYAN HEHIR

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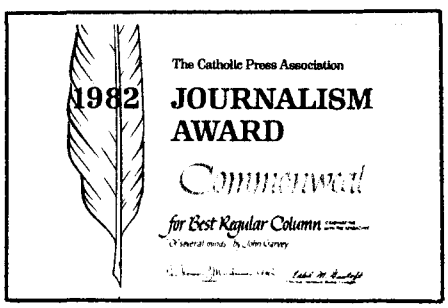

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